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# LIVELY CENTURY: SAN LEANDRO BAY

BY FREDERICK J. MONTEAGLE



EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT







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(Ed's: Regarded by many over the years as a dreary, shallow backwater, San Leandro Bay and its environs have figured in scores of lively episodes. In 1869, trotters raced on its shores for \$10,000 in gold and the new transcontinental railroad was baptized in blood as 15 died in a shattering head-on collision. A narrow-gauge locomotive plunged into the marshes in 1882 and the hero fireman, pinned in the wreckage, drowned as crewmen worked frantically to dam off the incoming tide. Seven years later, an argument over a seven-spot lottery ticket led to the thunderous explosion of a fuse company powder magazine. Seven died. In World War I, the bay was touted for a multi-million dollar Naval base. Col. Charles Lindbergh dedicated the new and nearby Oakland Airport on September 17, 1927. Now a new and bright chapter is being written as the East Bay Regional Park District develops an 800-acre park there and this series tells the story of a "Lively Century: San Leandro Bay.")

Battleships might have steamed through the Bay Farm Island channel past Alameda's South Shore, enroute to maneuvers or war, while destroyers and submarines transited the estuary, in 1916 plans to build a San Leandro Bay Naval Base had come to fruition.

There would have been facilities for an air arm also.

Congress had appropriated \$25,000,000 - probably the equivalent of five or 10 times that amount today - for a new naval base on the Pacific Coast. San Leandro Bay was one of a number of candidates for the honor.

But even the most fanatical supporters conceded that "some dredging" would have to be done -- at a "moderate cost."

Moreover, such naval fame might have come to San Leandro Bay 12 years or so earlier if the recommendations of one Albert

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Boschke, former Army engineer, had been heeded. He urged it as the best site in the Bay Area at that time. The fact that he was the president of a dredging company might, conceivably, have influenced his assessment.

Alas! Skeptical naval officers and congressmen decided the \$25,000,000 should go elsewhere and San Leandro Bay, where the two-county East Bay Regional Park District is now developing an urban, water-oriented park, lapsed once more into georgic solitude.

EBRPD plans ultimately to develop an 800-acre park on the bay offering such amenities as an eight-mile hiking and bicycling loop trail; three fishing docks; picnic units; parking lots; interpretive educational facilities including a bird observation tower; a marina and boat launching ramp; snack stands, a restaurant, and if the drought permits, irrigated turf.

The Park District is leasing the majority of the land from the Port of Oakland under terms of a 25-year \$1-a-year pact.

Fate decreed that transportation history would unfold on the shores of San Leandro Bay in the relatively short period of 58 years.

First, the pioneering transcontinental railroad would pass close to its marshlands in 1869. And then, in 1927, the Metropolitan Oakland International Airport, to the southwest, would be dedicated by Air Hero Col. Charles A. Lindbergh, airmail flights would begin, and <sup>the</sup>venturesome Dole trans-Pacific flights would grab the headlines.

There would be high drama and surpassing tragedy along the marsh-rimmed bay before the turn of the century in an area that for many years was unincorporated and "out in the boondocks."

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Instalment One, page 3--San Leandro

Curiously, although virtually the entire area lay outside of Alameda, before and after that city's incorporation, newspapers blandly referred to almost anything in the sector as "Alameda" until Oakland's annexations crept southward.

Readers should remember that today's San Leandro Bay is profoundly smaller and the configuration is entirely different from the one that prevailed in the 1850's. Extensive man-made fills and silt brought down by the tributary streams have made the difference. Not only the bay but the fringing marshlands were affected.

On October 14, 1869, the turf world was in a fever of excitement about the trotting match for \$10,000 in gold to be held that day between "Venture" and "Harvest Queen" at the newly-completed Pacific Race Track at the eastern end of San Leandro Bay. No trotting race for such large stakes had been held for years and the blood of the horses and the prominence of the backers whipped up interest.

(Next: The new east-bound transcontinental railroad train is involved in a head-on collision on the shores of San Leandro Bay; 15 die. A fireman on the narrow gauge drowns in the bay while pinned in wreckage; a fuse company explodes and seven die. The Pacific Cordage Company with its 1800-foot "rope walk" opens; Alameda's pioneering Sea Bird Yacht Club sails San Leandro Bay and water-borne commerce increases; there is a 64-round bare knuckles prize fight; and market hunters invade the bay)



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#### Instalment Two - San Leandro Bay

Continuing with the San Leandro Bay story synopsis, exactly one month after the 1869 trotting meet on the shores of the bay, the new transcontinental railroad was baptized in blood. The accident occurred only six days after the first train arrived in Oakland.

There was a catastrophic head-on collision at Damon Station on the southeast side of San Leandro Bay which was described as "the most frightful accident that ever occurred in California." Fifteen were killed. A man pinned in the wreckage by one leg pleaded with rescuers to chop it off. Incredibly, someone picked up an axe and did just that. The victim died moments later.

As the South Pacific Coast Railroad's night freight train was about to thunder across the San Leandro Bay trestle, enroute to Alameda on September 11, 1882, the marshland fill gave away and the locomotive and six cars left the tracks.

The fireman was inextricably trapped in the wreckage and, in a scenario that it is doubtful even Alfred Hitchcock might have conceived, he drowned as the inexorable incoming tide frustrated the frantic efforts of fellow crewmen to build a makeshift dam to hold back the bay waters.

Finally, at 5:18 a.m. on July 19, 1898, as the aftermath of a bitter argument over the proceeds of a 25-cent seven-spot lottery ticket, a Chinese employee of the Western Fuse and Explosives Company who had fled to the powder magazine after fatally wounding another Chinese, detonated 2 1/2 tons of powder, killing seven. The plant was just southeast of High Street and near the bay.

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There were other notabilia affecting San Leandro Bay over the years.

The Pacific Cordage Company, with its 1800-foot rope-walk, the longest in the United States, opened on the north shore of the bay near High Street on April 12, 1873. With its capability for manufacturing a longer unbroken coil of rope than any other plant in the world (correct)it received a U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey contract to turn out a sounding line 10 miles long.

Alameda's pioneering Sea Bird Yacht Club, with about 25 members, held its first recorded regatta on San Leandro Bay in April, 1875, and there were many more thereafter.

Meanwhile, starting in the 1850's, a fleet of at least six to eight sailing scows or schooners began plying the bay, carrying a variety of freight to and from half a dozen or more landings including Damon's, Clark's and Fitchburg.

In fact, in 1873, Henry C. Clark, the owner of the San Leandro Bay landing which bore his name, acquired the light steamer "Alice" to transport hemp to the new cordage works from San Francisco and carry back finished rope.

There were shady or outright illicit activities on the bay and on the shores that bordered it, too.

For instance, there was a 64-round bare-knuckles prize fight at the "Old Smelter" at Melrose (near High Street) on July 7, 1887, that consumed 2 1/2 hours and was described as "the most brutal contest that ever took place in Alameda County."

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Market hunters, using boats with swivel or punt guns of two and three-inch bore, loaded with washers, blank slugs, nuts and bolts, slaughtered ducks on the bay. And in the grain fields around its perimeter, the notorious "bull hunters," so called because they painstakingly stalked their game behind a docile steer or cow, wrought shotgun butchery at close range. They often threatened the lives of game wardens.

(Next: "Oystering" and the "oyster pirates;" the ghost of Ah Sam at the Bay Farm Island Bridge; the august U. S. Commission on Naval Yards and Stations visits San Leandro Bay on December 12, 1916, and is non-committal)

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#### Instalment Three - San Leandro Bay

A San Leandro Bay story summary should also take note of the fact that there were substantial oyster beds in the bay. And who knows, Jack London, who wrote about the "oyster pirates" in his "Cruise of the Dazzler" and "Tales of the Fish Patrol," may have tonged or dredged some of the stolen bivalves there along with the ineffable "Frisco Kid," "Barchi" of the Sporting Life Gang, the "Centipede," he of the long arms, and the "Porpoise."

London wrote of raiding the oyster beds off the west side of Bay Farm Island which, in those days, was also picturesquely referred to as Asparagus Island and Wind Whistle Island.

Lastly, there were terror-freighted apparitions that sometimes floated over the bay on dark nights, especially in swirling fogs near the Bay Farm Island Bridge. They reportedly were those of Ah Sam who was cruelly murdered in the same vicinity and whose tortured moans could be heard long after curfew.

It was in October, 1916, that various mayors and chambers of commerce heard that the august U. S. Commission on Naval Yards and Naval Stations headed by Rear Adm. J. M. Helm was going to visit the Bay Area to inspect any possible sites for a naval base.

Chamber of Commerce, municipal and county experts in the field of ballyhoo and boosterism were not long in going into action.

George E. Sheldon, secretary of the Fitchburg Improvement Club, a manic huckster in the field, immediately declared that

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"San Leandro Bay offers an ideal site for a naval base with its two entrances --the tidal canal for light vessels and the Alameda South Shore for large vessels." He ventured the bay could be dredged "at a very moderate cost" and many thousands of acres reclaimed. Fitchburg was on the south side of the bay.

In 1883, it had been described as "the town of the future...with its landing and acres of eucalyptus forest and miles of evergreen hedges."

Sheldon's remarks were echoed by James E. Sutton, former Alameda city engineer, who said "San Leandro Bay is just the place for a naval base."

The Alameda newspaper (Times-Star) editorialized that "San Leandro Bay as a site..would be unsurpassed. Probably no location about San Francisco Bay is more to be desired by the government. Of course it will require some dredging..."

Simultaneously, although everyone disavowed responsibility, a persistent rumor campaign got underway hinting that Mare Island had been a mistake from the start and its channel was always shoaling up.

The big day for the official inspection came on December 12, 1916. The Commission posed for newspaper photos, uniformly hatted and wearing gates-ajar collars.

Admiral Helm, a crusty seadog who impatiently brushed aside any social frivolity, and his fellow Commission members viewed San Leandro Bay's marshy fringes and shoaled waters from the vantage points of Alameda's Fernside Club pier and Bay Farm Island. Then the party's

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itinerary called for a trip to Oakland's Leona Heights for what was then referred to as a "bird's eye view" of the site.

The Navy's VIPs were informed that bay sites of 525, 715 or 741 acres had been blocked out and were available. Owners, who had projected modest profits at some far distant date, figuratively rubbed their moist palms as they mentally calculated the inflated prices Uncle Sam would pay.

(Next: Talk of the "nucleus of a new and thriving city" on the shores of San Leandro Bay in 1913; the trotting race at the Pacific Race Track on the shores of San Leandro Bay on October 14, 1869, between "Venture" and "Harvest Queen" for \$10,000 in gold)



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Instalment Four - San Leandro Bay

While the Navy's Commission on Yards and Naval Stations was still inspecting the claimed advantages of San Leandro Bay an Oakland newspaper (Tribune) quoted some pundit as saying that "particular stress was laid upon the protection afforded the San Leandro Naval Base from foreign invasion."

One of the hosts committed an unpardonable gaffe when, during a lull, he suggested brightly to Admiral Helm that it might be nice to have a spot of tea.

"Tea!" thundered the Admiral wrathfully,  
"This Board is not here to drink tea but to attend to public business."

Then the Commission departed, close-mouthed, indicating that a decision might not be reached for two years.

Three years earlier, there had been talk of "the nucleus of a new and thriving city" on the shores of San Leandro Bay if ambitious dredging plans materialized.

On May 27, 1913, the Morning Call wrote that "Capt. Alvin B. Barber, U. S. Engineering Corps, has been asked to inspect and report on the feasibility of dredging a deep water channel connecting San Leandro and San Francisco Bays, a long-cherished plan of many civic bodies....

"Having a water area larger than many great harbors in other sections of the globe, San Leandro Bay, after the required channel connections and deepenings, would become an ideal inner harbor with thousands of acres of land along the shore available for industrial and

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factory sites .. It could be the nucleus of a new and thriving city."

"The great \$10,000 match trotting race" between "Venture" and "Harvest Queen" on October 14, 1869, marking the opening of Pacific Race Track on the eastern shores of San Leandro Bay received plenty of print notice - not all of it complimentary. The San Francisco Morning Call was particularly vitriolic complaining of watered whisky at the track, no accommodations for the reporters (a fatal faux pas) and the necessity for turf patrons to ride in cattle cars from Alameda to the track because insufficient passenger coaches were at hand.

While the inaugural meeting drew perhaps 3,000 followers of the turf sport, no mention of the plant, sometimes referred to as the Brooklyn Park Race Track, survived in the histories and it had sunk into oblivion - a significant lacuna in the horse racing history of the state.

The oval, situated about 1700 feet from the shores of the bay on 180 acres of reclaimed marshland lay between Clark's and Damon's Landings but closer to the latter.

It was built by Messrs Tevis, Treat and Swett and leased to Henry Walsh and Company as the operators. The old San Francisco Bulletin wrote that the owners bought the land "for a mere song, paying in the neighborhood of \$3000 for it" and then built bulkheads costing about \$7000 more. Cyrus White laid out the track and graded it and on opening day, it was reputed to be worth from \$50,000 to \$75,000 with stables, 1500-capacity stands and hotel.

"Harvest Queen" was owned by Stephen B. Whipple who also owned the Ferry S. B. Whipple which boasted one of the few

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steam calliopes on the bay. Handling the reins was J. L. Eoff.

"Venture" was owned by George Treat, probably one of the owners of the new track, and his driver was Pat Farrell.

According to the racetrack advertising "Harvest Queen" was "a beautiful bright bay mare, five years old and sired by old Hambletonian, her dam, the dam of Teazle and Whipple's Hambletonian."

"Venture" was described as "a dark chestnut stallion six years old and sired by Old Belmont, dam Miss Moysten by American Boy."

The judges were Maurice J. Dooly and R. F. Morrow and a Mr. Parker and the advertising read that "the public may look with confidence for a good and fast race for young horses... As this race is made to test the stock of horses, great interest is taken in it by breeders of this state."

(Next: "Harvest Queen", who is described as "nice limbed and saucy looking" wins the \$10,000 in double eagles at the Pacific Race Track on the shores of San Leandro Bay. The October 14, 1869, meeting is called "the greatest race of the year")

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Instalment Five - San Leandro Bay

Best three out of five in the heats at the new Pacific Race Track on the shores of San Leandro Bay would be declared the winner of the \$10,000 in gold. "Harvest Queen," who, the Oakland Daily News reported was "as nice limbed and saucy-looking as ever," won the second, third and fourth.

"Venture" was in repeated trouble, breaking stride, and one spectator claimed he "broke" 13 times in one of the heats.

"Venture" won the first heat in the time of 2:46  $\frac{3}{5}$ ; and "Harvest Queen" was best in the next three in times of 2:44  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 2:46  $\frac{1}{2}$  and 2:45, respectively.

The opinion had been expressed "that if the heats were 'broken,' 'Venture' would carry off the persimmons but if three straight heats took the money, the 'Queen' would bear off the honors."

The San Francisco Bulletin wrote that it was "the greatest race of the year. A great many thousands of dollars were lost and won by professional horsemen, professional gamblers of all kinds and by many who work for a living."

The pool selling was presided over by a Mr. Bowley.

Taking cognizance of this, the Oakland Daily News wrote:

"With the San Francisco visitors, 'Harvest Queen' appeared to be the favorite although 'Venture' had many warm friends.

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"Pool selling was very brisk and the mare sold generally at 100, to 70 or 75 for the horse.

"Many larger bets had been made at even stakes in San Francisco but the pools were seldom above \$100 to \$200.

"'Venture's' friends were prompt in taking advantage of the decline and considered the opportunity for speculation at such rates as offering better inducements for investment than White Pine stocks (The White Pine mining excitements in Nevada)

"The large saloon of the hotel was crowded with pool buyers until the horses were brought out."

Prior to the fourth heat, The Daily News reported, "pool selling was brisk, the principal customers, those venture-some speculators who had 'bought short' on the horse and would be called upon to pay the difference.

"The pool auction offered them an opportunity to hedge and they availed themselves of it to get even.

"Many of the spectators," the Oakland Daily News continued, "were somewhat disappointed at the time made, some having bet on 2:38. Considering, however, the age of the horses - only five years - and the fact the track was a little heavy in some places, the time was fair."

Continuing, the News wrote that "many causes combined to add interest to the occasion.

"In the first place, the track was new ... Then besides, was added a question of superiority of breed -- two different bloods being represented, both equally popular, and having an equal number of champions.

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"It was a contest between the Belmont and the Hambletonian blood and, to some extent, it was regarded as a test of superiority. It was known that the race was no 'put up thing.'

"It was also shown that the race was for 'blood' and that \$10,000 in gold -- a small fortune -- was staked upon the result.

"No such large amount has been trotted for, we believe, since the good old days of the Pioneer and Union tracks..."

(Next: Colorful writing about the October 14, 1869, trotting race on the shores of San Leandro Bay. Newsmen of the time complain bitterly about the lack of accommodations at the track, watered whiskey and inadequate transportation there and back)



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Instalment Six - San Leandro Bay

"It was felt," the Oakland Daily News continued, "that the new track (Pacific Race Track on San Leandro Bay) would mark a new era in the annals of the California turf and, as a fitting commencement, the great race of yesterday was gotten up.

"Many carriages came over, filled with gaily dressed ladies and gentlemen and the scene so affected an unidentified Englishman present that he slapped his companion on the shoulder and exclaimed:

"'Blast me bloody hies, me boy; but this is like the Derby we 'ave at 'ome, you know ...'"

The Oakland Daily Transcript contributed some colorful writing, describing the scene as the turf aficionados wended their dusty way to the new track:

"The Southern part of the county was alive (and full of dust) with everything that could walk, trot or run -- old men and boys, women and children; men with their wives and men with other men's wives.

"There were hacks and carts, carryalls and gigs, rockaways (and now and then a runaway) and there were side springs, and 'C' springs, elliptic and thorough brace, in fact, everything that could turn a wheel."

Laying the groundwork for its editorial cannonade against the race track management and its improvisation in not arranging for suitable mass transportation for the turf fans, the San

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Francisco Morning Call first emphasized the importance of the meeting by writing:

"The match between 'Harvest Queen' and 'Venture' yesterday at the Pacific Race Track, Alameda, for \$10,000 created great excitement in the sporting world.

"The blood of the horses, the prominence of the backers and the largeness of the stake, made many expect a race rivaling the best time of 'May Queen' since her arrival in California."

Then the Call's turf writer took off his gloves and flailed away sarcastically at "Henry Walsh and Company" declaring:

"Judging by the unanimous sentiments of condemnation, disgust and anger expressed concerning this swindle, it will be a long time before any of our citizens will be seduced again into such involuntary discomfort."

The big trotting race "for \$10,000 -- \$5000 a side" -- was scheduled to start at 1:30 p.m. and long before that, San Francisco punters began filing aboard the chartered Ferry Alameda to be conveyed to the Alameda terminus of A. A. Cohen's Alameda and Hayward Railroad.

From there, the followers of the Sport of Kings were to be conveyed by rail to the Brooklyn Park Station only 200 yards, the advertisements said, from the racetrack grandstand.

The ferry was jammed with humanity and, regrettably, when the Alameda nosed into the slip, the waiting "race track special" boasted only three passenger cars.

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This prompted wrathful bellows of indignation almost instantly and Cohen's retainers hastily added seven freight cars including some designed for cattle, to the consist and off they headed on the seven-mile trip to bangtail haven.

Wrote the Call's turf expert:

"At the Alameda terminus the turf followers were bundled into baggage, freight and cattle cars" for the trip..."Some rode on the roof to escape the suffocating atmosphere..."

(Next: Further complaints about the lack of preparation for the big 1869 trotting race at the Pacific Race Track on San Leandro Bay. A few newsmen - mostly from the East Bay - think the affair is "admirable." The race track lapses into obscurity and disuse)

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Instalment Seven - San Leandro Bay

Still dwelling on the lack of preparation to transport the turf faithful to the new Pacific Race Track and its trotting race for \$10,000 in gold, the San Francisco Bulletin claimed that it required two trains to handle the impatient crowds.

The Call's harness race writer wasn't through yet.

He observed that race track devotees had come from as far as Stockton and San Jose but "no courtesy or attention" was accorded them and no provisions had been made for the return trip.

At 3:45 p.m. when the races were over, he wrote, the crowd broke for the nearby railroad station, expecting to find a train awaiting them.

Lamentably, none was there and it was 6 p.m. before a train passed by, picking up some but leaving about 100 behind.

"A large number were left at the grounds," the Call reporter wrote "with no means of returning and no accommodations for food nor for sleeping unless they partook of the hospitalities of an adjacent haymow."

The Bulletin's man reported that some of the race fans didn't get back to San Francisco until 8 p.m.

The Call's reporter, perhaps disgruntled because "there were no accommodations for reporters," fired a few more rounds in the general direction of the race track. He wrote:

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"The sole suppliers of food were vendors of ice cream, sardines and sweet cakes ...

"But if edibles were scarce, drink was plenty: whiskey well-watered and barrels of beer as well as bottles of what an unkempt bar keeper termed 'injin ale.'

"To show how widespread an interest was taken in the race," the unregenerate Call reporter penned wickedly that "several reverend padres were on the grounds but only to gratify a laudable desire to see the fine stock.

"They did not mingle with the ungodly."

Simply proving again the correctness of Mark Twain's observation that "it is difference of opinion that makes horse races," the turf writer for the Oakland Daily News was enchanted by everything about the October 14 meeting and wrote:

"The arrangements for the race were entirely satisfactory and the admirable manner in which the premises had been arranged called forth the praise of all present ..."

But then, being an Oakland newspaperman he was probably prejudiced in favor of local enterprise and besides, he didn't have to ride the cattle cars.

In August and October of 1870, there were other publicized meetings at the Pacific Race Track but the purses, instead of being a swaggering \$10,000 in double eagles were more on the order of a frugal \$80.

By August, 1887, Frank DePue, a horseman, was training his mounts at "the old racing park at Melrose," and by June, 1893,

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members of Alameda's Gentlemen's Driving Club were getting the track into shape for use.

Members of the Club included H. P. Moreal, Dr. John Hamilton, J. T. Fleming, R. R. Lomax, G. Lapman and W. H. Hooper. They said the "track was nice and springy and good for the horses' feet."

(Next: Preliminary events leading up to the head-on collision November 14, 1869, between the new transcontinental railroad train and A. A. Cohen's local on the shores of San Leandro Bay. Fifteen are killed)



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Instalment Eight - San Leandro Bay

While the long-heralded transcontinental railroad was completed at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869, there were two significant local events that set the stage for "the most frightful accident that ever occurred in California" at 9:02 a.m. November 14, 1869. The site was Damon's Station on the southeast side of San Leandro Bay.

In sequence, first, the inaugural transcontinental train arrived in Alameda (correct) over the rails of the Alameda and Hayward Railroad on the evening of September 6, 1869, to the accompaniment of firing of guns while a triumphal arch, draped with flags and evergreens, made a brave showing.

Then, despite repeated rumors that the transcontinental train terminus would never be moved to Oakland, the "Overland," as it was already beginning to be called, rolled into the Oakland Pier about 5 p.m. November 8.

It still bore the insigne of the Western Pacific Railroad (correct) for the Central Pacific had only recently acquired the road and the name had not been changed. Much later, of course, a uniform change to Southern Pacific became effective throughout the system.

Although Oakland's Broadway was lined with six strings of various colored flags from First to Ninth Streets, the cannon "Live Oak" fired continuously for an hour and forensically-inclined dignitaries such as Mayor John B. Felton were ready to deliver speeches, the train arrived early and barely paused enroute to the Point.

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Some 3,000 had turned out for the big event and the railroad right-of-way was lined with blazing piles of cordwood and pitch all the way from San Antonio Creek to Oakland Point. The city was ablaze with blue lights, rockets and bonfires and shoals of boys had been supplied with blue, red and green torch sticks. The brass band was on hand in full force.

Understandably, Mayor Felton and top-hatted subalterns, left literally with unread speeches, felt aggrieved.

Now it was six days later - the Sunday morning of November 14, 1869.

At Oakland Point, Engineer Edward Anderson, 38, was oiling around the motion of the ponderous Locomotive "Sonoma," preparatory to an 8:30 a.m. highball.

Engineer on the newly-inaugurated transcontinental "overland" was a responsible job - the pinnacle of operational railroading in 1869 - and Anderson cast a practiced eye over his train's six-car consist:

Express car, baggage car, smoking car, Silver Palace Sleeper and two passenger coaches. Passengers were beginning to straggle aboard including Nevada Federal Judge Alexander W. Baldwin.

The came the highball from Conductor R. H. Gilmore and the "Sonoma" slowly gathered speed rolling the eastbound "varnish" along at a smart 25 miles an hour into the morning sun.

Down the track about seven miles was Simpson's Switch (later Melrose) on the shores of San Leandro Bay where Western Pacific trains entered a four-mile stretch of rail governed under

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a "joint trackage" arrangement with the Alameda and Hayward Railroad. A switchman at each end of the section of track gave the "all clear" if the line was unoccupied.

The "Sonoma" and the eastbound "overland" were due at Simpson's about 8:55 a.m.

The employees' time table rule which Anderson had committed to memory read: "All trains will approach the switches at San Leandro and Simpson's with great care and know that all is right before passing."

(Next: Immediate events leading up to "the most frightful accident that ever occurred in California" - the November 14, 1869, collision between the new transcontinental railroad train and A. A.Cohen's local on the shores of San Leandro Bay. Each locomotive doing about 25 miles an hour, they collide in a swirling fog in the classic "cornfield meet" of railroad lore)



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Instalment Nine - San Leandro Bay

The east-bound "overland" reached Simpson's Switch and the clanking "Sonoma" with 125 pounds of steam in the boiler, slowed to a trifle below 10 miles an hour before entering the critical "joint trackage."

A cautious man, Engineer Anderson instructed George Thompson, apprentice fireman, to ask Switchman Bernard Kane whether the track was clear.

"Anderson asked Thompson to ask Kane if the Alameda train had passed 'on down'" the Daily Alta California reported. "Thompson went down on his knees, beckoned to the switchman, and asked him if the train had 'gone down.'

"The switchman said something and gave him the 'go ahead' signal."

Elsewhere, Kane was reported to have told the crew of the "Sonoma," that it was "all right; go ahead."

So fatefully, the eastbound "overland" gathered momentum again, speeding toward a fog-shrouded rendezvous with catastrophe and death a mile and a half or so down the track.

Formerly an engine wiper, Kane had been on the job as switch tender at Simpson's for only two weeks. It was tragically revealed later, he could not read and had only a limited knowledge of the weekday timetable and none concerning the Sunday timetable which was the one in effect on November 14, 1869.

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Anderson, reassured by Kane's "go ahead," was confident he had the "right of road" on the four-mile stretch and widened the throttle to where the "Sonoma" was doing about 25 or 26 miles an hour.

If passengers were viewing the passing panorama from the car windows, they must have seen San Leandro Bay and the marshlands surrounding it and, to the east, grainlands which had been harvested.

Meanwhile, secure in the knowledge that he had the "right of road" as accorded him when he passed the San Leandro switch Engineer Henry A. Williamson, at the throttle of the Alameda and Hayward Railroad's "Faxon D. Atherton," was thundering up the highline toward Alameda.

His "consist" included an express and baggage car, a smoking car, three passenger cars and a box car.

A swirling fog was blowing across the track and the bleak marshlands when, almost simultaneously, at a distance of perhaps 175 to 200 feet, both engineers saw impending disaster and whistled "down brakes!"

The force and sound of the impact of two trains colliding at, perhaps, 25 miles an hour, was indescribable and with the memory of the disastrous 1868 earthquake still fresh in their minds, many living as far distant as a half a mile feared another massive temblor was occurring.

There was a momentary silence after the collision - the classic "corfield meet" of railroad lore -- broken only

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by the hiss of escaping steam.

Later, the Alta California wrote that "the wailing, shrieking and crying when the crash occurred was terrible. The Engineer of the Western Pacific train (Anderson) was thrown into the air and frightfully mangled ... The interior of the cars was besmeared with blood and the agony and suffering of the wounded (correct) was heartrending."

(Next: One railroad engineer perishes; the other leaps to safety. Wooden cars are telescoped in a scene of indescribable chaos. "Great iron axles were bent as though they had been whalebone.")



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Instalment Ten - San Leandro Bay

In the split second before the crash on the shores of San Leandro Bay, Anderson's fireman, Peter McManus, jumped and saved his life but the apprentice fireman, George Thompson, perished.

Williamson, engineer on the Alameda and Hayward Railroad, "hit the dirt" and saved his life. As he leaped from the cab, he called to his fireman, Charles Martin, 35 to follow. But Martin failed to escape.

Frank B. Milliken, head brakeman on the Western Pacific died in the wreckage also. Trainmen who miraculously escaped death included Conductor Gilmore and Brakeman Daniel Feeny of the Western Pacific and Conductor Robert Owens and Brakeman Ned Nerson of the Alameda and Hayward Railroad.

Help was slow in coming because of the remoteness of the collision scene. It was probably 20 minutes after the crash the Alameda County Gazette reported, that "a young man named Spear came dashing into town (San Leandro) on horseback and announced the catastrophe."

The scene was one of utter confusion.

Two cars in each train were telescoped.

A car had been driven backward to within six feet of the end of the Western Pacific's smoker. There were about 30 men in the car.

M. B. Davis, messenger for the U. P. Express Company in the car next to the tender in the Alameda and Hayward train

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recounted that "I heard a sharp whistle and within an instant, almost, saw the tender rushing through the front of the car.

"I leaped through the side door."

Federal Judge Baldwin was in a somewhat awkward and helpless position -- the judicial nates were in the customary and immemorial position on the smoking car "water closet" when the locomotives slammed together with pile-driver force.

He was killed instantly.

Later, it developed that while the judge's body was being removed, some light-fingered helper swiped his valuable diamond sleeve buttons and a considerable sum of money.

The Oakland Transcript which got out three Sunday extras wrote:

"The two engines reared like horses and fell with a terrible crash, the cars behind them driving into the others as one shuts up the barrels of a telescope.

"Great iron axles were bent as though they had been whalebone; stout piston rods were curled and twisted, some of them resembling the letter 'S.'

"Horses were at once saddled and men galloped off to San Leandro, Oakland and Alameda as fast as whip and spur could urge their steeds."

The Alameda County Gazette discoursed on the aspect of the wreckage, writing:

"Two cars were 'telescoped' on each train; one ran into and through the other like the shutting of a spy-glass or telescope.

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"The telescoped cars of the Western Pacific train exhibited a most terrible sight.

"In one end of the car were some 16 men, most of them dead -- all of them injured -- jammed and tangled with a mass of sticks, splinters, and iron ... But two persons were killed on the Alameda train -- the fireman, Martin and one passenger."

The Transcript was the authority for the fact that the 35-ton "Sonoma" was the product of the Norris Locomotive Works of Lancaster, Pa., and the "Faxon D. Atherton" had been built by the Grant Locomotive Works of Paterson, N. J.

(Next: The legs of a man who perished in the collision are "hewn off" to permit rescue of the living. Rubberneckers clog the scene where 15 died, on the following day. Hackmen do a thriving business charging \$2.50 for a ride to the collision site from Oakland)



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Instalment Eleven - San Leandro Bay

"The baggage car of the Alameda train," the Alta California wrote, in providing eyewitness descriptions of the railroad collision scene on the shores of San Leandro Bay, "was thrown up about perpendicular and the passenger car adjoining it was telescoped."

Some of the Western Pacific cars canted crazily at 45 degree angles.

The Oakland Transcript, which contributed some of the more colorful descriptive writing reported that "one poor fellow, who seemed to have been killed outright, was held firmly by the legs between two fragments of the cars.

"It was necessary to get him out in order to relieve a living man who was wedged in behind him and as the body could not be otherwise extricated, an axe was procured and his legs were hewn off."

The Alta California contributed:

"The aspect of the wreck beggars all power of description.

"You see only among the stubble of the field, under the golden glow of the Sabbath sunshine, some rods of utter chaos.

"The dead, as they lay in the stubble with their faces to the skies, whither their spirits had so suddenly been called, presented a great variety of appearance.

"Some showed marks of horror while others bore a strangely peaceful countenance."

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Roads from Oakland and Alameda were soon thronged with conveyances of all sorts, saddlehorses and those on foot.

It was estimated that before the wreckage was cleared away, some 10,000 persons visited the scene and an informal count indicated that at one time, about 5,000 were peering into the twisted cars and pacing up and down the marshland right-of-way hindering rescue efforts. Hackmen were charging \$2.50 for a ride to the scene from Oakland.

As a thoughtful courtesy to 1869-era "rubberneckers" on the day following the wreck, when "shoo-flies" had been built around the wreckage, all Alameda and Hayward Railroad trains made suitable stops at the scene to allow minute inspections.

Both railroads immediately dispatched telegraphers to the scene who tapped into overhead wires to assist in coordinating the rescue work. But it was estimated that nearly an hour elapsed before substantial aid was on the scene.

In the van were 15 physicians including the distinguished Dr. Jonathan Letterman, former Medical Director of the Army of the Potomac after whom the hospital at the San Francisco Presidio is named; and the Doctors W. P. Gibbons, Eustace Trenor and Joseph C. Tucker of Alameda.

Even the name of the hospital facility in Alameda to which many of the injured were taken conspired to heighten the horror and confusion of the day.

It was known as the Alameda Park Insane asylum and was owned by Doctors Tucker and Trenor.

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(Next: A macabre story: a man trapped by one leg in the train wreckage, cries out piteously to be rescued and finally, in desperation, begs that someone cut off his leg. Some dubious Good Samaritan does so; the man dies within moments. The various post mortems: why was an illiterate man who couldn't read the timetable, entrusted with the switch?)



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Instalment Twelve - San Leandro Bay

Probably topping all the macabre stories of the 1869 train wreck on the shores of San Leandro Bay was that carried by the San Francisco Morning Call.

Curiously, none of its competitors printed the item, possibly out of pique because they were beaten through the Call's journalistic enterprise or, perhaps, because they had been unable to verify it.

"A wounded (correct) man," the Call reported, "begged those who reached him to get him out but they were unable to do so.

"He then entreated them to cut his leg off so that he could be gotten out and a man employed at the 'Half Way House' took an axe and actually cut off the leg.

"The poor fellow was taken out but died in a few moments ..."

Presumably the "Half Way House" referred to was "Armstrong's Half Way House" on San Leandro Road, now East 14th Street and near the scene of the crash. Half Way Houses in those days were primarily saloons and had none of the 1977 connotations about them.

Soon after the collision, W. W. Armstrong, Lewis Smith, William Bevis and Patrick McGinnis headed for the scene, well stocked with tools, water and that sovereign remedy, whiskey.

It was Armstrong who was quoted in the Transcript as saying:

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"The sound of the collision was peculiar and terrible like the sound that precedes an earthquake.

"I felt the shock as if heaven and earth had come together."

So it is entirely possible, assuming the Call's story was accurate, that the intellectually-inclined saloon proprietor, Mr. Armstrong, or one of his cronies, wielded the axe that liberated the pain-tormented train passenger from his imprisonment.

Certainly, it was the ultimate and drastic alternative.

Now came the post-mortems, actual, written and conversational. How and why did it happen? Newspaper editors penned many a leader about the affair.

Interest and investigation centered immediately upon that unfortunate analphabet, Bernard Kane, the switch tender at Simpson's Switch who had signaled the eastbound transcontinental train to enter the four miles of "joint trackage" which the Alameda and Hayward train already legally occupied.

Kane's responses to various questions were both pathetic and incredible. He said variously:

"I can't read the timetable; I can't read.

"The switch was set for the train eastbound (the Western Pacific) to go through and so set because I did not think there was any danger ahead.

"I did not know whether the Alameda train had 'passed down;' I had no idea about it. I did not think it would be in the way."

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A. A. Cohen, who was in the process of selling the Alameda and Hayward Railroad to the Western Pacific said he asked Kane whether he said anything to the W. P. engine crew and he replied:

"Yes. I told them it was all right; go ahead."

(Next: The coroner's jury attributes the railroad tragedy to the "ignorance and incompetence" of the switchman; he is charged with manslaughter but the charges are soon dropped. Newspapers are critical of the railroads.)



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Instalment Thirteen - San Leandro Bay

The blundering switchman, Bernard Kane, who all agreed was responsible for the tragic railroad collision on the shores of San Leandro Bay, also conceded that he didn't disclose to his superiors that he couldn't read the timetable.

"I didn't tell the gentleman (A. J. Stevens, Western Pacific trainmaster) who showed me the timetable that I couldn't read," he said. "I told no one of the fact."

Apprised of this, Stevens declared: "I didn't know at that time, that he was unable to read. I should not have confirmed him in that position had I known it.

"It was his duty to have stopped the east-bound train as long as the Alameda train had not passed there."

Stevens, obviously a good "company man," added:

"I should think the switchman was at fault.

"It don't appear to me that any of the officers are to blame. It don't seem to me that the switchman was a competent man..."

The coroner's jury, which met at the call of Alameda Justice of the Peace W. B. Clement, the acting coroner, at Alameda's Loyal Oak Hotel on November 19 arrived at the same conclusion that Stevens did.

The verdict said in part that "the collision

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Instalment Thirteen, page 2, San Leandro Bay was the result of and was caused by the ignorance and incompetence of the switchman, Bernard Kane, employed at Simpson's Station, in giving a signal to the officers of the Western Pacific train, indicating that it was 'all right; go ahead.'" The verdict added that Kane had deceived the railroad about his inability to read.

Two days later, Kane was arrested on manslaughter charges and bail set at \$2000.

A preliminary hearing was held on November 26, before San Leandro Justice of the Peace George E. Smith in Smith's Hall. S. P. Wright appeared for the District Attorney; R. B. Noyes for the defense.

Succinctly, the defense's case was that it was no crime to be unable to read or write and, moreover, no intent had been shown.

On November 29, the case against Kane was dismissed.

The newspapers had the last word.

The Oakland Transcript, which rated the collision as one of "the most lamentable in the annals of railroad accidents," said of Kane:

"As for this switch tender, he seemed to have had no more idea of what an outsider would regard as an essential part of his business than had the oxen grazing in the field behind him. He could not even read his timetable..."

A San Francisco newspaper (Chronicle) which had demanded "a strict and searching investigation" observed:

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"The testimony by the switch tender is remarkable.

"He could not read the timetable.

"He did not know whether the 'down train' had passed or not.

"By what right of law or humanity do railroad companies appoint such men to responsible positions and thus jeopardize the lives of passengers?

"Are they warranted in killing people by such transparent neglect of the commonest precautions? And do they hope to escape censure and punishment under the hollow excuse that they cannot watch all who are in their employ?"

(Next: Fancied panaceas for averting future railroad accidents including forcing Railroad Company Directors to ride in the cab of every passenger locomotive. The tragic drowning death in 1882 of Fireman Daniel Driscoll of the South Pacific Coast Railroad as he lies pinned in the wreckage. A brakeman dies too)



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Instalment Fourteen - San Leandro Bay

Newspaper editors and others had a field day offering free advice on how to avoid or alleviate such horrendous railroad accidents in the future as that which occurred on the shores of San Leandro Bay.

The inventive Alta California in an excursion into the field of mechanical engineering declared that "a spring should be attached to the rear of the tender, so powerful that it will prevent any serious damage to the passenger cars even if the locomotive is suddenly arrested while going at a speed of 20 miles an hour!"

E. F. Fitch, a Cosumnes school teacher who suffered a broken leg in the collision dryly offered a method to cut down on railroad accidents:

"Just put a company Director in the engine cab of each passenger train."

It is not recorded that the lordly Central Pacific, which controlled the W. P. adopted either of the suggestions.

According to the newspaper legend, bad news comes in threes and the next disaster to visit San Leandro Bay occurred about 8:05 p.m. Monday, September 11, 1882.

It involved the tragic death of Daniel Driscoll, 24, fireman on the South Pacific Coast Railroad's Train 42, the through freight from Santa Cruz, who drowned in the marshland waters while pinned in the locomotive wreckage. Brakeman John Daly, 30, perished also.

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Engine No. 10, "one of the heaviest the company owns," was headed toward Alameda at about 12 to 14 miles an hour when it struck the notorious "sink" in the marshland fill about half a mile south of the San Leandro Bay trestle. It careened from the narrow gauge track, dragging six cars with it into the marshland ooze.

According to the Alameda Argus, the accident was "in some particulars, the saddest that we have ever recorded."

An Oakland newspaper (Tribune) wrote it was "the second accident of this kind that has happened in the locality" within three weeks and added "the place is considered dangerous." The Argus added, on a deja vu note, that on June 17 a South Pacific Coast freight train had been "ditched" there and on August 15, the San Jose train was "detained some time by a depression in the road on the marsh...."

So it was obvious that the railroad's imperious disregard for ominous portents set the stage for the accident which the newspapers referred to as a "horrible tragedy" and a "railroad horror."

With a trainload of freight composed largely of sugar, fruit, potatoes and onions, Engineer Peter Symons was eyeing the track as he looked forward to the end of his run. Driscoll, in his accustomed seat on the left side of the cab, was watching the road ahead.

When the roadbed began to give away on the treacherous marsh and the heavy engine lurched to the left, Symons leaped from the cab.

Driscoll tried to follow suit. As the Argus described it, Driscoll "had risen to his feet but not in time to get out of the cab." He was thrown backwards as the locomotive tottered for a

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moment before plunging off the fill and rolling over.

Daly, atop one of the box cars, was pitched into the marsh and killed almost instantly by the fall.

(Next: Desperate efforts to rescue the trapped fireman, Daniel Driscoll, in the night darkened San Leandro Bay marshes as the tide creeps in, inexorably. He cries for help. He is pinned in the wreckage by the locomotive reverse lever. One rescuer is assigned to hold Driscoll's head above water)



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Instalment Fifteen - San Leandro Bay

Escaping steam and smoke added to the horror of the South Pacific Coast Railroad's derailment in the marshes south of San Leandro Bay and No. 10's headlight beams stabbed the night skies at a crazy angle.

There was a starless sky and as the locomotive and cars settled into the marshland muck, a "frightful scene ensued."

The only other illumination at first came from the incandescent coals in the locomotive fire box which cast a fitful light through the tules.

"The fireman, Driscoll, went down at his post with his engine and was caught in the debris underneath ... with his legs entangled in the machinery, unable to move either backward or forward," an Oakland reporter (Tribune) wrote. "He remained in this position crying piteously for aid ..."

Symons, the engineer, recalled that crewmen, including Conductor Forrest E. Longdon and William Decker and Sam Wonderlich, head and rear brakemen, respectively, obtained shovels from the caboose.

"We dug under him (Driscoll) with our hands, not being able to get at him with the shovels on account of the cab being in the way and a lot of wood and stuff under him," Symons recounted.

Longdon recalled that he sent Decker along the trestle to High Street to obtain aid and, meanwhile, he spoke to

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Driscoll intermittently for an hour.

Longdon related that between anguished groans and moans Driscoll said:

"Boys, I am gone; it's no use."

Soon, the rescuers discovered that Driscoll was imprisoned by the engine's reverse lever or "Johnson bar" and its quadrant and the protruding cab structure made it impossible to use tools to extricate the man. Portions of the cab were cut away with axes in the dim light of kerosene lanterns but the situation was not improved.

In desperation, a sheet was looped under Driscoll's arms and according to an Oakland newspaper (Tribune) "the united strength of six men was applied to draw him out but it was impossible, his feet being so tightly clinched under the cab of the locomotive....."

William R. Dow, South Pacific Coast Railroad engineer who was at Alameda Point when the news of the wreck came, started for the scene with locomotive and tender, and picked up a doctor and three or four men at High Street.

"They had cut the roof of the cab away to get at him," (Driscoll) Dow recounted..."They dug down about two feet and struck something hard.

"It was the reverse lever and some wood and we could dig no further...Driscoll was groaning. When I left, 12 men were there." Dow said the only thing the attempt to pull Driscoll out with the sheet accomplished was to move him six or eight inches "and relieve him so that he could breathe more easily."

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By now, the men toiling desperately in the marshland mud under feeble lights knew that they were working against time --the incoming tide. San Leandro Bay waters washed the fill to a depth of about three feet at high tide.

At the most, they had only about two hours!

As the tide rose gradually and incoming wavelets lapped at the imprisoned man, one of the rescuers was assigned to hold his head above water, now a foot deep.

(Next: The crewmen who are trying to rescue Fireman Daniel Driscoll in the San Leandro Bay marshes bend all their efforts toward building a small coffer dam to hold out the waters and avert a drowning death. "Then the end had come and strong men turned away and wept at their own weakness in not being able to rescue him...")



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Instalment Sixteen - San Leandro Bay

The rescue crews which had been toiling in the cold water and ooze to extricate Fireman Driscoll from the South Pacific Coast Railroad locomotive, now turned to a new and last-ditch effort:

To throw up a makeshift cofferdam about Driscoll to exclude the San Leandro Bay waters.

The Alameda Argus' dramatic account read in part:

"A second sometimes determines a man's fate.

"But one man could get out of the cab at a time.

"Had Driscoll been the first, the engineer would have been the victim in the mud.

"Then his struggle would have been prolonged for the two hours that Driscoll lived until the advancing tide claimed its victim in spite of human effort.

"In the darkness, confusion and horror of the time, everything was done that suggested itself to those present. They tried in vain to remove the wreck that lay over the sufferer.

"They attempted to build an embankment around him to keep out the merciless sea but all in vain.

"The water advanced, relentless as fate, to his lips and a few moments more, to his nostrils.

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"Then the end had come and strong men turned away and wept at their own weakness in not being able to rescue him..."

Newspaper accounts said the tormented victim was conscious until the last moment.

Of poor Daly, who was hurled to his death from a freight train high car, Symons had this to say:

"I found Daly about three car lengths from the engine, covered with onions and potatoes.

"I cleared the debris off of him, picked him up and found he was dead."

The final chapter on Driscoll was written when the coroner's inquest found he had drowned; that he had been pinned under the narrow gauge locomotive for 20 hours before he was extricated; and that "the left side of his body was frightfully crushed."

The Alameda Argus thought so highly of the Oakland newspaper (Tribune) story about Daly's funeral that it reprinted it, together with the fact that the South Pacific Coast purchased "a very inexpensive funeral."

"And so," the story read, "they filed along Broadway to the 'City of the Dead' - the corpse of a brakeman in a hearse and the solitary friend in the hack following behind.

"It was only a brakeman who died at his post and the world cannot pause even to recollect his name, much less mourn his untimely taking off.

"There is a mother, however, away back in Nebraska who will weep for her boy and her tears will hallow the memory

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of an unfortunate wretch who, dying thus, a stranger in a strange land, found none so poor to do him reverence, even in death."

"The body of Driscoll, the fireman, whose terribly dramatic death has been told in every newspaper in California, was conveyed to San Jose yesterday where it will be interred with more fitting honors than were accorded the remains of John Daly."

Today, both men sleep on in unmarked graves, Daly in a section of the Mountain View cemetery which was not provided with perpetual care and Driscoll in the Santa Clara Mission cemetery. Very likely, both tombs were once identified with wooden markers which have long ago crumbled to dust.

(Next: Almost a month later, the South Pacific Coast Railroad is still trying to stabilize the marsh fill where the night freight train derailed and two men died. A fuse company plant blows up on the shores of San Leandro Bay on July 19, 1898 and seven die. Only a 20-foot crater remains. The explosion follows an argument between two men over a 25-cent seven spot lottery ticket. One man fatally shoots the other and then barricades himself in the powder magazine. One newspaper calls the incident "the most desperate deed of a hundred years.")



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Instalment Seventeen - San Leandro Bay

There were a few postscripts to the tragic South Pacific Coast Railroad accident in the marshes south of San Leandro Bay.

The Argus reported on September 23, 1882, that a huge derrick, mounted on a scow, had been floated into a slough at high tide where a chain was passed under the boiler and the locomotive "hoisted bodily out of the mire in which it was embedded." The wreckage was put aboard a flatcar bound for the company shops at Newark.

Also, on September 30, and again on October 4, South Pacific Coast track crews were still at work at the "sink" trying to stabilize the roadbed fill.

The Argus quoted frustrated railroad officials as saying that "there seemed to be no bottom to the mud there."

The last in the trilogy of disasters on the shores of San Leandro Bay occurred at 5:18 a.m. July 19, 1898. It had gotterdammerung or judgment day overtones when the Western Fuse and Explosives Company blew up killing seven and leaving nothing but a 20-foot crater behind.

The blast, which was heard as far away as San Jose and damaged buildings within a radius of three quarters of a mile, was triggered by an acrimonious dispute over the proceeds of a 25-cent "seven spot" lottery ticket.

Quong Chung, described in the newspapers of the day as the "fiendish Mongolian" or the "Mongolian maniac," mortally

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wounded Quong Tan; barricaded himself in the fuse company plant's powder magazine; and then touched off about 2 1/2 tons (correct) of casked black powder when lawmen got too close.

There was one account, provided by friends of the slain man, that Quong Chung was "a desperate high binder who would take a life on the slightest provocation." The appellation "high binder" in those days referred to Oriental "hatchet men" or hired assassins.

The San Francisco Morning Call described Quong Chung's action as the "most desperate deed of a hundred years.

"It was the work of a Chinese murderer, who, seeing the noose dangling before his eyes for a most cruel crime, took refuge in a powder magazine and hurled himself and his would-be captors into eternity.

"Oriental fatalism was responsible."

A San Francisco newspaper (Chronicle) characterized the man as "a murderer and fatalist; a desperado of his word," and a competitor (Examiner) wrote "all this was done by one crazy, murderous Chinese. With the acuteness of a maniac, he chose a remarkable place of hiding."

The plant, which had been erected 10 years earlier, consisted of nine buildings and was situated on Clark Street, just south of High Street and near Clark's Landing at the northeast end of the bay. The brick powder magazine in which Quong Chung barricaded himself for about 14 hours was about 20 by 20 feet in dimensions.

Every newspaper had its own unique way of spelling the name of the slayer and his victim and the tally reached seven

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variations. Even the coroner's office report, which became the official version, may have been incorrect.

(Next: The events leading to the blowing up of the Western Fuse and Explosives Company. Quong Chung, carrying a .32 revolver, locks himself in the powder magazine with 2 1/2 tons of black powder and defies authorities. Rifle-toting deputies gallop up and surround the place. Some 3,000 to 5,000 people gather to watch. It's a waiting game)



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Instalment Eighteen - San Leandro Bay

The stage for mass tragedy at the Western Fuse and Explosives Company on the shores of San Leandro Bay was set about 3 p.m. July 18, 1898. Quong Tan, the murder victim, encountered Quong Chung in the fuse company's kitchen in the employee barracks and bitter words were exchanged.

As Quong Tan, an Alameda resident, bent over a butcher block, cutting up meat, Quong Chung struck at him savagely with a hatchet, nearly severing his right ear. Then he ran to his quarters in the 24-room barracks, obtained his .32 caliber revolver and returned and shot Tan twice in the abdomen.

Chung was an eight-year employee at the fuse works; worked in the spinning department, "the most dangerous of all work connected with fuse making;" and had free access to the powder magazine.

The shots had hardly died away before Quong Chung was sprinting for the powder magazine, carrying with him his six-shot revolver, matches and a slow fuse.

Before startled employees could take any action, the "wily Mongolian" as the Call referred to him, hastily erected a black powder keg barricade to assist in blocking any ingress.

The magazine was filled with 25 and 50-pound kegs of powder.

Quong Chung selected seven 50-pound kegs and two 25-pound kegs for his parapet laying a double row of 50-pound

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containers for the foundation.

Then he sat back to wait.

Since Melrose, where the plant was situated, was an unincorporated area, the sheriff's office had responsibility and within the hour, Alameda County Sheriff C. B. White arrived on horseback.

Probably close to a dozen rifle-toting deputies and constables were called up also. A close guard and surveillance at the magazine was begun at a prudent distance of about 50 feet.

Some lawmen began the tedious task of evacuating everyone from houses in the immediate neighborhood. But news travels fast - one newspaper printed five "extras" - and before dusk had fallen, between 3,000 and 5,000 of the curious were on hand, disregarding warnings to "stay back." Some remained throughout the long night.

Before the sheriff left about 10:30 p.m. he left orders with hisson, Deputy Charles White, Jr., 27, chief of the posse, "simply to watch the man and see that he does not get away and if he wants to talk, talk to him."

There was nothing but watchful waiting -- a sort of sitzkrieg - until shortly before midnight when Quong Chung shouted to one of his "brother celestials" as an Oakland newspaper (Tribune) put it, that he wanted a drink of water.

Deputy White, who was in command, agreed to allow a Chinese to carry a glass to him but not before Billy Moffitt suggested that the water should be "doped as the easiest way to effect the arrest ..."

White vetoed that plan on the grounds that Quong Chung was too cunning to be deceived by the ruse.

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Instalment Eighteen, page 3, San Leandro Bay

(Next: Ruses to lure the Chinese out of the powder magazine. He is referred to as a "wily Mongolian." The oldest son of the sheriff who heads the posse, parleys with Quong Chung and, believing the man is prepared to surrender, walks toward the powder magazine)



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Instalment Nineteen - San Leandro Bay

As night fell and tension grew at the fuse plant on the shores of San Leandro Bay where the embattled Chinese was defying the law, F. H. Pittman, corporation secretary, tried earnestly to lure Quong Chung from his powder magazine redoubt.

"I went to the powder magazine after dusk," Pittman related "and had a talk with Quong Chung. I realized the power he had in his hands and to avert disaster, I told him I would do anything I could to help him get away; that he could have the door open or shut as he wished and that I would send him some money.

"He told me he had a fuse set and a revolver and would blow up the magazine if anyone approached him.

"I promised to do anything for him -- get a buggy, furnish him with money, etc.

"I had an idea that by giving him some money, I might get hold of his hand and jerk him out so I went toward the door but when I was 20 or 30 feet away, he told me to stop or he would shoot.

"I gave the Chinese boss \$10 to hand over to him in case he escaped..."

The straw boss, We Pack, tossed an eagle - a \$10 gold piece - in the door. The "wily Mongolian," the Call wrote, wouldn't take it in his hand.

Perry Wilson, a carpenter who lived across the street from the fuse works, says he heard Quong Chung tell Pittman:

more--

Instalment Nineteen, page 2, San Leandro Bay

"Me sabbe you; go away. I blow you up."

Around 4:30 a.m. on July 19 as the war of nerves continued, Deputy Charles White, Jr. and some of his fellow deputies repaired to the home of Deputy Constable William Stephenson across the street for coffee and a light snack.

They returned to relieve other lawmen around 5 a.m. and, according to Deputy Sheriff Fred Sherrott, who was painfully injured in the blast, Quong Chung saw White and started a conversation.

It went something like this according to the Pidgin English accounts in several newspapers:

"Charlie (one of the common nicknames applied indiscriminately to Chinese at the time) you want to surrender?" White asked.

"Yes. Me heap hungry," was the reply.

"All right, you come out; we won't hurt you."

White continued. "Chinaman you hurt, he no die. (A falsehood since Quong Tan died about 1 a.m. after giving a deathbed statement.)

"You come out, we not hurt you."

"Me come out by 'm by .... two or three days," was Quong Chung's vague response. He had appeared at the door of the magazine.

"You ought to come out now," Deputy Sheriff Ed White quoted his brother Charles as saying.

"All right; I'll come out right away," the treacherous Chinese responded.

With this apparent assurance, Charles White and Constable Gus Koch walked toward the magazine.

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Instalment Nineteen, page 3, San Leandro Bay

(Next: The deputies are almost at the powder magazine door when there is a report like gunfire and then a shattering explosion. Five lawmen and two others die. The blast occurs at 5:18 a.m. A 68-year-old woman across the street perishes. Fires break out everywhere)



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Instalment Twenty - San Leandro Bay

"They were almost at the door when Quong Chung closed it with a bang!" Deputy Sheriff Fred Sherrott related later, telling of the events that led to the shattering explosion of the fuse company powder magazine and the deaths of seven.

Sherrott and Ed White were following Charles White, Jr. the sheriff's son, and Gus Koch but were about 80 feet behind.

It was 5:18 a.m. and the sky was streaked with the first signs of dawn.

"Less than a second later," Sherrott recounted, "I was being carried with a cloud of debris and earth swiftly over the ground.

"My face was cut and my clothes torn, and I cannot understand how it happened that I and Ed White were not killed.

"I have no doubt that as soon as the door was closed, Quong Chung fired his pistol into the powder."

In the thundering detonation that followed, seven persons - five of them peace officers - were killed instantly and there was a lingering hint that possibly an eighth person died.

The seven known victims were:

Deputy Sheriff Charles White, Jr., son of the sheriff and chief of the posse; Constable Gus Koch, 33; Deputy Sheriff George C. Woodsum, 32, former Berkeley town clerk and Alameda County deputy clerk; Deputy Sheriff Joseph J. Lerri, 44, father of eight; Deputy Sheriff Daniel C. Cameron, 36; Mrs. Sarah J. ("Sadie") Hill, 68, a San Francisco

more--

Instalment Twenty, page 2, San Leandro Bay

widow who was visitng in the area; and Quong Chung, whose .32 revolver touched off the staggering havoc.

Mrs. Hill, who was visiting a Mrs. Pride at the home of Constable Stephenson was killed when falling timbers struck her. The Stephenson home, directly across the street from the fuse works, was reduced to a pile of rubble. Obviously, she had chosen to ignore warnings to evacuate all nearby structures.

Soon the moans and groans of the injured could be heard.

A huge Newfoundland dog, someone's pet, was howling mournfully. The blast had shattered both his front legs and he was trying to drag himself along, leaving a trail of blood.

The force and shock wave of the explosion was similar to the effect of a cyclone or hurricane. Four houses near the fuse plant were leveled; at least 40 more were badly damaged; and the Melrose District School, about 1 1/2 blocks away, was so badly damaged it had to be rebuilt.

All the windows in a San Leandro drugstore, three miles away, were shattered.

Within minutes, fires broke out in all the surrounding area. A cut of boxcars on an industrial siding where some householders had taken refuge after being evacuated, was soon ablaze.

Barnyard fowl by the hundreds were killed by the force of the blast.

So devastating was the effect of the explosion that speculation began immediately that the kegs in the magazine

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Instalment Twenty, page 3, San Leandro Bay

contained dynamite rather than black powder. Each newspaper had a different "exclusive" figure of the tonnage of explosives in the magazine, and it went as high as 20 tons.

(Next: After finding seven right ears but only the recognizable remains of six male bodies, the coroner's office speculates there may have been eight victims. A deputy's body is found 1500 feet away. Only a fragment of queue is all that remains of Quong Chung. Some 20,000 gather on the line of march for the funeral of the five peace officers. Fellow officers' stars are draped in black crepe)



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Instalment Twenty-One - San Leandro Bay

The force of the fuse company explosion on the shores of San Leandro Bay was devastating. Charles Roman, whose house was across the street from the plant, was tossed 20 feet through the air.

Perhaps half of the buildings of the Pacific Cordage Works on Cordage Avenue, about 200 feet from the fuse plant, were demolished. The plant had not been in operation for some time.

A particularly macabre aspect of the disaster developed on the following day when Dr. W. S. Porter, a coroner's office attache, speculated that there might have been an eighth victim.

This, he said, was the grisly proof:

He had seven right ears, but only the recognizable remains of six male bodies.

"The unaccounted for ear," the San Francisco Bulletin pridefully disclosed, "is attached to a piece of skull that shows a cheek with a stubby growth of red beard on it."

The speculation was that an eighth victim might have been a red-haired tramp who was sleeping in some handy hobo jungle.

The broken remains of Charles White's body were found some 1500 feet away from the magazine. He had taken the full force of the explosion.

Souvenir hunters and the curious descended on the scene like locusts later on in the day despite attempts by deputies to deter them.

The broken remnants of the mass murderer's .32 revolver which presumably touched off the blast were found almost a quarter of a

more--

Instalment Twenty-One, page 2, San Leandro Bay  
away from the magazine site.

But the only mortal remains of Quong Chung, who was credited with committing "the most desperate deed of 100 years" was a small, torn remnant of his queue.

It was found by a group of eager youngsters.

The coroner's jury visited the scene and its verdict declared that the explosion was touched off "with murderous intent by one Chinese named Quong Chung, employee of said powder company, who had free access to said powder magazine."

As the official account of the tragedy was pieced together, it developed that the victim, Quong Tan, was a member of the Alameda Meat Market firm of Quong Chong and Company on Railroad Avenue near Park.

An estimated 20,000 (correct) persons lined Oakland's Broadway from the courthouse as the procession for the five peace officers, who were victims of the blast, proceeded north toward Mountain View Cemetery. Some accounts said it was the largest funeral ever held in Oakland.

The leading newspaper (Tribune) turned the rules on its Page 1 on the day of obsequies adding to the somberness of the occasion.

Fellow officers turned out in force and their stars were draped in black crepe. As an obbligator to the sound of horses' hooves on the pavement and marching feet, the bell of Engine House No. 6 between Broadway and Washington Street tolled continuously. Many stores were closed.

Mourners paused at the First Congregational Church to hear the Rev. E. S. Chapman pronounce the eulogy and allude to the "mad act of this Mongolian maniac."

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Instalment Twenty-One, page 3, San Leandro Bay

(Next: Other fuse and powder works around San Leandro Bay. Residents are nervous. With the advent of 1873, the huge Pacific Cordage Company with its 1800-foot "rope walk" - the longest in the United States - opens on the shores of San Leandro Bay. Soon it produces a sounding line 10 miles long)



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Instalment Twenty-Two - San Leandro Bay

Hardly had the last obsequies for the dead in the fuse company explosion taken place, then residents of the unincorporated Melrose District, frightened, indignant or both, were circulating petitions to halt rebuilding of the plant.

For good measure, those residents and others in the Fruitvale District pointed out that perhaps something should be done about another fuse works - the Ensign Bickford Company which later became Coast Manufacturing and Supply - which was situated near Damon's Landing on the east side of San Leandro Bay. More specifically, it was located on Damon Avenue, later 66th Avenue, and not too far distant from the Lockwood School.

While the Western Fuse and Explosives Company was founded in 1888 it appears that as early as 1881-82, Manuel Eissler was manufacturing Union Blasting Powder on the same site.

About 1882, also, residents in the Melrose District near San Leandro Bay undoubtedly were uneasy about the nearby presence of a firm with the doomsday title of the Thunder Powder Company. The officers, however, all had innocuous names: William Sherman, president; Charles De Lacy, manager; and Charles M. Oakley, secretary.

Unlike the Western Fuse Company, however, it did not disappear in a cloud of smoke and brimstone, with pyrotechnical effects.

A firm with a much more reassuring name - the Safety Powder Company - was doing business at San Leandro Bay around 1879.

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Instalment Twenty-Two, Page 2, San Leandro Bay

The area was remote, unincorporated, and there were few habitations nearby so it seemed an ideal site for the explosives and arsenal trade.

San Leandro Bay got into the industrial "big leagues," on April 12, 1873, when the Pacific Cordage Works opened for business with its 1800-foot "rope walk" - the longest in the United States - which had a capacity to "manufacture a longer unbroken coil of rope than had ever yet been made in the world without 'doubling.'"

It was situated on Cordage Avenue on the northeast end of the bay just south of High Street on a marshy lot 63 by 2000 feet. All of its advertising proclaimed that the plant was situated "on San Leandro Bay" and, in fact, one news story reported that the bay came "within a few feet of the .. end of the 'walk.'" Much piling had to be driven for foundations.

By July of 1873, the company bragged that it was manufacturing a 4000-fathom (24,000 feet) sounding line for the U. S. Surveying Ship Hassler "for use in sounding the sea between here and China for the bed of a telegraphic cable."

A month later, the firm announced it was manufacturing two more sounding lines, one six miles long and another 10 miles long, for the U. S. Surveying Ship Tuscarora. It boasted that these would "'lay over' anything heretofore manufactured."

The company was also proud of the fact that in February, 1874, it turned out 120 fathoms of 10-inch manila rope. Facilities had been added to manufacture tarred cordage "never before made in the United States."

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Instalment Twenty-Two, Page 3, San Leandro Bay

(Next: The Pacific Cordage Company has a five-acre experimental hemp field which today, undoubtedly would have to be ringed with guards. Hemp is marijuana. The experiment, reportedly, was a "grand success." The firm was capitalized for \$250,000 and employed 100. The rope walk was 20 feet wide, 10 feet high and 1800 feet long and contained three sets of four-foot gauge tracks.)



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Instalment Twenty-Three - San Leandro Bay

A perfectly fascinating novelty in the context of today's usages, addictions and prevailing tastes was the Pacific Cordage Company's five-acre experimental hemp field near its plant on the shores of San Leandro Bay.

The firm planted and began cultivating the test plot in September, 1874, presumably to see whether it would be practical to cut down on the necessity of importing so much of the Manila variety.

A news story reported that "it is a grand success ... The yield will be about 1000 pounds per acre of remarkably strong fiber and, when prepared, it will be worth about \$250 a ton."

A century later, the firm would undoubtedly have found it necessary to ring the field with guards for nowadays, hemp in this country is popularly known as marijuana or "pot" and even window box harvests are coveted.

It was in July, 1872, that the formal announcement was made that Pacific Cordage would build on the San Leandro Bay site owned by Alameda's Capt. J. D. Farwell.

A platoon of swaggering capitalists were backing the venture to the tune of about \$250,000 and these men were named as the founders:

John and Tiburcio Parrott, Oliver Eldridge, James Otis, Jabez and George Howes, Peter Donahue, W. F. Babcock, Farwell, William Norris, Benjamin Hartshorn and a Mr. Wilcox.

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Instalment Twenty-Three, page 2, San Leandro Bay

Eldridge emerged as the president; George Howes, secretary; Donahue, treasurer; and Farwell, financial manager and agent.

George W. Pitman was named superintendent but later, Farwell succeeded him.

The plant opened with about 70 employees but that number increased to 100 before the plant closed about 1878 after reportedly being acquired by the San Francisco Cordage Company. There had been cut-throat competition.

The company imparted a bit of news to the Alameda Encinal before it opened that would have enraged "women's lib" when it announced that men would be paid at the rate of \$2.50 a day and "female labor instead of Chinese" would be hired at an average of \$1.25 a day.

The story added that "girls will work piece work" and hence, if they were diligent and untiring, they might fatten that \$1.25 figure.

There were no "fringe benefits" in 1873.

Coincident with the grand opening, the Oakland Daily News which had not received any advertising from Pacific Cordage brusquely dismissed the affair with about a paragraph, concluding, "employment will be furnished for about 80 persons, mostly boys and girls."

Besides the rope walk, which extended for a third of a mile and was 10 feet high and 20 feet wide, there was a two-story main building, 46 by 190 feet; a 36 by 40-foot engine house equipped with a 200 horsepower engine with a 22-inch cylinder from the Paterson, N. J. shops of Todd and Rafferty; and a storehouse, 44 by 80 feet. The engine house stack towered 60 feet and was 10 feet at the base, tapering to six feet at the cap.

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Instalment Twenty-Three, page 3, San Leandro Bay

The factory or main building was at right angles to the "walk," forming a perfect "L."

(Next: The Pacific Cordage Company plant, which required 400,000 board feet of lumber to build, has a capacity of 4,000,000 pounds of cordage a year. Henry C. Clark of Clark's Landing on San Leandro Bay, acquires the Steamer Alice to serve the cordage works. Price cutting dismays the owners of the new plant)



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Instalment Twenty-Four - San Leandro Bay

The Pacific Cordage Company was a substantial addition to the San Leandro Bay industrial complex and the Alameda newspapers trumpeted the fact that it required 400,000 board feet of lumber to build the plant, including the 1800-foot rope walk.

The Encinal explained that "three substantial railway tracks traverse the rope walk from one end to the other, each with a four-foot gauge ... These are to convey the machines throughout the entire length of the 'walk'; also for hauling and laying rope. The heavy machinery is for forming and laying processes."

It was estimated at the outset that the plant would produce 4,000,000 pounds of cordage a year. A total of 12,000 bales of hemp were used in the first year, 500 of them of the American variety.

Were any of the employees inclined to snip off bits of hemp covertly in the ropewalk or elsewhere for a clandestine drag? The record is silent.

By July of 1876, Farwell was reporting that 40 bales of manila rope were being manufactured daily or the equivalent of about 11,200 pounds.

Since Clark's Landing, operated by Henry C. Clark, was handy to the new cordage works, it was only natural that his fleet of sailing scows would carry raw hemp to the plant and transport some of the finished product back to San Francisco. Pacific Cordage was also served by the Central Pacific Railroad whose tracks passed directly in front of its main buildings.

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Instalment Twenty-Four, page 2, San Leandro Bay

The Encinal mentioned on several occasions that Clark's schooners moored in San Leandro Bay "alongside the rope walk."

In fact, the cordage business was so brisk that Clark purchased the little steamer Alice, which had been employed in the Antioch trade, to serve Pacific Cordage. The Encinal reported that she was of light draught with a carrying capacity of about 60 tons and would make San Leandro Bay stops either at Bay Farm Island or at Porter's Wharf on the Alameda side, or, in some cases, both.

It was probably the first time - and possibly the last - that a steamer of any size left a wake in San Leandro Bay waters.

Not long after the big plant opened, the Encinal (which was the recipient of daily advertising) reported that "a charming and unique pagoda of a cottage adorns the rude plaza" in front of the plant and Capt. Farwell would make his residence there and become a sort of castellan for the cordage empire.

By July of 1874, the same paper reported that "quite a hamlet is growing up in the vicinity of the rope walk" and the company was erecting a workers' barracks, about 30 by 40 feet.

The eupeptic capitalists, backing the new venture, were congratulating themselves on having established a utopia in cordage land when the bulk of the mighty and consequential Tubbs Cordage Company cast its shadow over the newcomer.

"Tubbs," the Encinal reported, "put their merchandise upon the market at a ruinous rate and continued the system of 'freeze-out' until a few days past "when, it developed, Tubbs "had agreed to a fair and uniform price."

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Instalment Twenty-Four, page 3, San Leandro Bay

Today, such an agreement between competitors would inevitably bring down indictments and dismay but the pact seemed to make sense then: "neither company was profiting."

(Next: Want to rent a five-room house for \$8 a month or buy a lot for \$90 with terms of \$5 a month and no interest? Alameda's pioneering Sea Bird Yacht Club stages its first reported regatta on San Leandro Bay in 1875. Races usually started at the Bay Farm Island Bridge or the narrow gauge trestle)



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Instalment Twenty-Five - San Leandro Bay

In closing the chapter on the short-lived Pacific Cordage Company, there were two melancholy incidents in its first year which reached the newspapers.

In May of 1873, John Reid, a New Zealander, became entangled in the rope walk machinery and died shortly afterward.

Three months later, Alex Neastees was tending one of the laying machines in the rope walk when his left hand and arm were drawn into the machinery. His little finger was literally ripped out of his hand and his arm was broken.

The accidents, so early in the operation, may have been due to the fact that employees had not fully learned the manufacturing techniques.

As Alameda gradually became surrounded by San Leandro Bay industry and more and more people moved into the residential community, some surprising bargains surfaced.

For instance, in February, 1871, Otto Poschwitz offered a five-room house for rent for \$8 a month. It was near the Encinal Station.

By 1888, there were "desirable business and residential lots," 25x100, 25x125 and 25x175 fronting on Pacific and Buena Vista Avenues and the proposed Grand Boulevard for \$150, \$200, \$250, \$300 and \$400 with one-fifth cash down and the balance on "easygoing terms" of \$10 a month.

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Instalment Twenty-Five, page 2, San Leandro Bay

On January 18, 1888, the Argus reported that "the cottage of which Mr. R. C. Hooker was the lucky winner on the last drawing of the Louisiana Lottery, is situated on the east side of Alameda Park ... The lot is 37-1/2 by 128 feet and the property is valued at \$3250.

By April of the same year, the Argus was advertising the sale of 50 lots in the "Governor Stanford Camp Tract" bounded by Railroad, Pacific, Buena Vista and Walnut. The paper added that "the tract got its name from the fact that during the war, a lot of volunteer soldiers were mustered here and remained encamped for several days."

Not far away in Fruit Vale, 25x120-foot lots, just a 10-minute walk from Fruitvale Station, were selling for \$90 in 1869 and the terms were 18 monthly payments of \$5 with no interest charged.

Alameda's pioneering Sea Bird Yacht Club with, perhaps, 25 members, staged its first recorded regatta on San Leandro Bay in April, 1875, (at high tide) and there was regular Bay competition which found its way into the public prints through 1880. Perhaps it continued after that date.

To qualify as a club member you must have either fallen overboard or built a boat. Most of the craft were in the 11 to 18-foot class but the Alameda Encinal of August 25, 1877, reported that "the keel of a 26-foot boat was laid this week by two young gentlemen of the club ... Another catamaran is about to be built by a company of young men."

The Sea Bird Yacht Club's membership must have been a jaunty, carefree group and their races usually began at the Bay

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Instalment Twenty-Five, page 3, San Leandro Bay

Farm Island Bridge although later, the starting point became the South Pacific Coast Railroad's trestle. Spectators were informed in May, 1879, that "a fine view of the boats can be had at the narrow gauge bridge."

(Next: The Sea Bird Yacht Club stages its San Leandro Bay regattas with eclat, complete with a judges' boat which dips the colors and fires a cannon. Silver loving cups and champion flags are dispensed to winners. Best times for the course, names of boats and owners)



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Instalment Twenty-Six - San Leandro Bay

A formal San Leandro Bay regatta course was charted by Alameda's pioneering Sea Bird Yacht Club and, at regular intervals, this was the seagoing circuit utilized:

The boats sailed from the bridge (or trestle) on a line for Clark's Warehouse (at the northeastern end of San Leandro Bay) until they reached a stake with a white flag, at the mouth of East Creek; they rounded that on the north side and sailed on a line for another stake at the mouth of the cutoff, passing this on the east side; then on to John Hamlin's oyster beds, passing on the south side, and then to the starting point.

At the May, 1875, regatta, the Encinal reported, "as the boats neared the Yacht 'Minnie,' at anchor in San Leandro Bay and in charge of Harry Calvin, they were saluted by the dipping of colors and the discharge of a cannon aboard."

One yachtsman estimated the course covered about five miles, and the best published times included those of the Fairy Shell at 43 minutes, five seconds and the Ruby at 43 minutes, 35 seconds, established in 1879 and 1880, respectively. The jestingly-named Lightning swept around the course once in one hour, 16 minutes and six seconds.

At the conclusion of the May, 1875 regatta, the Encinal reported, "the Fairy Shell changed owners ... an enthusiastic admirer of her sailing qualities, being bent on owning her."

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Instalment Twenty-Six, page 2, San Leandro Bay

The consideration was not mentioned but W. Peck sold his fleet craft to Chris Taaffe.

The June, 1876, regatta ended in a dead heat between C. H. Foster's "famous double ender," Bessie and E. B. Jerome's Daisy. The Bessie was credited with having "an enormous spread of canvas." No times were given and possibly the same problem arose that occurred in August, 1877, when the Encinal's reporter was "so engrossed he forgot to get the results."

A Champion Flag and silver-plated loving cups were awarded by the club each year. In at least one year, the Susan Nipper was used as the judges' boat. Capt. Harry Clark was the umpire in 1876 and on other occasions, George L. Wilson and Ed Christensen served in that capacity.

In August, 1876, there was a match race between Capt. M. W. Peck's Amie and Foster's Bessie from the Bay Farm Island bridge (often casually referred to as the "Bay Bridge" in those days) to Hunter's Point and return. Amie won in the time of two hours and 55 minutes, besting the "famous double ender" by nine minutes.

No attempt will be made to match up the owners with the sailing craft that plied San Leandro Bay during the period 1875-80 since sales and trades were the order of the day. But these were the names of some of the yachts and their owners:

SAILING CRAFT - "OK," Flat Iron, Watermelon, Witch of the Wave, Bessie, Fairy Shell, Ruby, Scottish Maid, Amateur, Lila, Nellie, Grasshopper, Cricket, Emma, Lightning, Alice and Willie, Pet, Lively, Thunder, Flash, Lulu, Verdi and Daisy.

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Instalment Twenty-Six, page 3, San Leandro Bay

YACHTSMEN - Frank E. Haile, Eugene Maillott,

Dr. William L. Twichell, C. H. Foster, Chris Taaffe, Linwood Palmer, J. E.

Blethen, E. Minor Smith, Sterling McKean, M. W. Peck, Robinson Gibbons,

Frank Runnells, Ross Taylor, Nicholas Brogan, E. B. Jerome, Charles

Bradley, C. M. Radcliff, A. S. Barber, J. B. Horton, E. B. Mastick and

J. E. Andrews. There were many more for often, the names of the owners of

the craft were not supplied.

(Next: The "incendiary yachtsman," Burt Stevens. In a fit of pique, he sets fire to the "Jumbo" in San Leandro Bay. Substantial waterborne commerce starts on the bay about 125 years ago. Many Landings are established on San Leandro Bay including Damon's and Clark's which are founded circa 1852-53. Was Damon's Landing about where the Coliseum is now?)



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Instalment Twenty-Seven - San Leandro Bay

The last chapter in San Leandro Bay's early yachting annals should, perhaps, deal with one Burt Stevens, an itinerant and Bohemian Alameda photographer who got to be known as the "incendiary yachtsman."

In June, 1887, according to the Alameda Argus, Stevens maintained a weekend "gallery" in a tent near Shell Mound Park and spent the balance of the week sailing the Jumbo "up and down the shores of the city."

Somewhere along the line, he removed the Jumbo's keel and substituted a centerboard so "that he could more gracefully sail his craft on shallow water."

Not long after, he began "experimenting with the new improvement on San Leandro Bay but the centerboard did not work to a charm and did not increase the speed of the vessel as he expected.

"This angered the owner," the Argus reported and in a tantrum, "he ran her ashore near the drawbridge.

"He then removed from the cabin, everything of value, cut down the masts to get the blocks and then set fire to the vessel which burned to the water's edge."

Disenchanted golfers have been known to do such things but yachtsmen?

Few who gaze at the shallow waters of San Leandro Bay today can comprehend that starting, perhaps, 125 years ago, a ponderable water-borne commerce began there and by the 1870's half a dozen

more--

Instalment Twenty-Seven, page 2, San Leandro Bay  
or so sailing sloops, scows or schooners - some of 60 tons burden - were  
plying the inland waters.

By 1873, the little Steamer Alice was  
churning its way to Clark's Landing at the northeast end of the bay.

The major "landings," as they were called,  
were Damon's on the eastern shore, established by Nathaniel Damon circa  
1852-53 and Clark's on the north shore, just south of High Street,  
established by Henry C. Clark in 1853.

Interestingly, Nathaniel Damon's namesake and  
grandson, who lives in Richmond and his sister, Mrs. Laura Tittermore, of  
Pacific Grove, both believe that Damon's Landing must have been situated  
about on the site of Oakland's modern coliseum.

So where sea chanties may have been sung a  
century or so ago, they have been supplanted by the clamorous and sometimes  
obscene yells and hoots of baseball, basketball and football fans.

Perhaps the best contemporary assessment of  
a portion of San Leandro Bay commerce was contained in an August 10, 1878  
issue of the Alameda Encinal.

The article, headed "Old Alameda Point,"  
read:

"Twelve months ago, it was generally believed  
that skippers with loaded vessels would find it almost impossible to make  
their way through San Francisco Bay and the sloughs on the southerly shore  
of Old Alameda Point, east of High Street.

"Today, they know better from actual experi-  
ence and almost any day in the week, from one to half a dozen good-sized  
schooners may be seen in that vicinity, unloading or working into Clark's

more--

Instalment Twenty-Seven, page 3, San Leandro Bay  
wharf to discharge freight.

"Last Monday when we rode over to the Point  
to note progress, we found five large schooners lying at anchor in the  
vicinity including Capt. J. J. Winant's (prominent oysterman and shipper)  
Caroline Medau at her ease near the oyster beds.

"The others were loading with lumber at  
Renton, Holmes & Company's yard, corner Oak Street and Encinal Avenue -  
E. B. Renshaw, manager - there being probably not less than half a million  
feet in sight..."

(Next: Water-borne commerce booms at Old Alameda Point (at the Bay Farm  
Island Bridge) Some nine Landings are established on San Leandro Bay.  
The names of some of the sailing sloops and schooners. Frequent ship  
collisions with the Bay Farm Island Bridge)



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Instalment Twenty-Eight - San Leandro Bay

Continuing with its booster-type story about the booming future for San Leandro Bay commerce, the Encinal wrote:

"With the indications before us, we were convinced that the present wharf facilities would soon be altogether inadequate for the demands of the trade.

"Not only lumber but coal and wood, oysters and general merchandise now come by cargo to this landing.

"Energy, combined with a moderate outlay of capital, we feel assured, will, within another 12 months, make Old Alameda Point a prominent feature of this town."

Old Alameda Point was situated on the Alameda shore about at the Bay Farm Island crossing.

Other landings and wharves on San Leandro Bay included Gary H. Moulton's wharf at the foot of High Street; Asaph Cleveland's Old Landing, near Moulton's; Fitchburg Landing, serving the booming hamlet of Fitchburg on the east shore; the Derby Wharf; Nels Anderson's Landing at Sand Point near the Bay Farm Island bridge; Nathan Porter's wharf, also near the bridge; and Halverson's Landing.

The maritime commerce on San Leandro Bay was devoted largely to lumber, hay, straw, grain, corn and other truck crops, oysters, coal, cordage, hemp, safety fuse and the raw materials to make it. The little sailing vessels fanned out to San Francisco, Petaluma, Sacramento, Stockton and Knights Landing. They were, of course, subject to wind and tides.

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Instalment Twenty-Eight, page 2, San Leandro Bay

What were the names of some of the sailing sloops and schooners that criss-crossed San Leandro Bay? To begin with there were Captain Anderson's Bonita, Caroline and Jenny Gray. Then there was Nathaniel Damon's Katie Holmes which may have been named after a popular actress of the time.

Other than the Steamer Alice, operated by Henry C. Clark, the ownership of the other vessels has been obscured by time. But a partial roster of the names includes the National and the Caro True. The Caroline Medau was an ocean-going vessel which required a crew of 14 to sail but she anchored near the Bay Farm Island Bridge. In 1879, Captain Potts took her to the Society Islands returning with a cargo of shells, oranges and coconuts. Two divers accompanied the vessel.

Sailing scow collisions with the Bay Farm Island Bridge were a fairly common occurrence. Poor visibility, adverse tides and winds and, occasionally, a balky span, conspired to cause the accidents.

In October, 1878, for instance, the Caro True "ran into the drawbridge ... damaging the structure considerably."

In May of 1879, the Katie Holmes, "in charge of three boys and heavily laden with straw," ran against the bridge and was run ashore.

Assuming the crew was composed of three of Nathaniel Damon's four sons, there may have been paternal rebukes.

In October, 1879, a brisk year for maritime collisions, the Alameda Argus reported that about 2 p.m. as the Bonita left Porter's wharf with a load of produce for San Francisco, W. D. Haralson, the Bay Farm Bridge tender, attempted to throw open the draw.

more--

Instalment Twenty-Eight - San Leandro Bay

"Although it had opened five or six times during the day," the Argus wrote, "for some cause it failed to work and so as the sloop rounded Clark's warehouse, Haralson called out and signaled for them to keep off as he could not open the draw.

"His cries were not heard until too late and the tide swept the vessel against the bridge, carrying away the mast and crashing things generally ..."

(Next: Nathaniel Damon and Henry C. Clark, pioneers in water-borne commerce in the truest sense of the word with their sailing fleets and San Leandro Bay Landings. Damon's Landing is on Damon Avenue now 66th Avenue. He maintains a retail outlet at Damon Avenue and San Leandro Raod, now East 14th Street)



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Instalment Twenty-Nine - San Leandro Bay

Although Nathaniel Damon and Henry C. Clark established their little sailing scow landings on San Leandro Bay soon after the gold rush and hence, were pioneers in local water-borne commerce in the truest sense of the word, scant attention has been paid to them.

Professor J. M. Guinn in his "History of the State of California," published in 1904, devotes only about a paragraph to each and other volumes with pretensions to being local histories, virtually ignore them.

Guinn wrote that Damon's "name is connected with one of the earliest warehouse, storage and freighting enterprises on San Francisco Bay ...From a small beginning, he became the best known shipper on that side (Alameda County) of the bay."

A native of Pembroke, Mass., where was born on July 27, 1829, Damon, a handsome, bearded man who stood 6 feet 2 inches tall, arrived in San Francisco by way of the Panama Isthmus in 1851 and headed straight for Fraser River, B. C. where, he succeeded in accumulating a small stake at the placers. Then he returned to California to invest in lands in the vicinity of San Leandro Bay.

According to Guinn, he was not entirely satisfied with his first purchase and reinvested in 40 acres where Damon's Landing was established. That, Guinn says, was 1862.

The date differs from that provided by Thompson and West in their History of Alameda County. They wrote that both Clark and Damon established their landings in 1852. Perhaps Guinn was the victim of the treacherous typographical error.

more--

Instalment Twenty-Nine, page 2, San Leandro Bay

According to Guinn, who obviously interviewed the sons, since Damon died in 1899, the enterprising shipper and warehouseman saw the area as one which would soon produce bountiful crops of grain, hay and vegetables.

He set to work building the necessary wharves and warehouses and, according to Guinn, constructed three sailing vessels. A grandson and granddaughter refute this and say that insofar as they know, Damon purchased his fleet.

Damon married Laura M. Tillson in March, 1856, and there were four sons - George E., Herbert E., Joseph T. and Walter K.

Three of the four sons were born in the east for reasons not entirely clear now but, in each case, Mrs. Damon made the long and sometimes hazardous voyage around Cape Horn as an expectant mother and then nursed the newly-born child on the return ocean voyage. Perhaps Mrs. Damon felt more comfortable in "civilized" Massachusetts among her relatives and believed the ocean ordeal was worth it.

During the time his sons attended the Lockwood School, Damon was a trustee of the Lockwood School District.

Grandson Nathaniel Damon, who lives in Richmond, is one of the three surviving children of the eight fathered by Walter K. Damon.

"I've heard," the grandson said, "that when the wind or tide wasn't right, my grandfather would send down a team of horses to the mouth of the creek or slough to tow the boat up to the landing. There were even times when manpower was used.

"Grandfather's house and the Landing were

more--

Instalment Twenty-Nine, page 3, San Leandro Bay

situated on Damon Avenue in those days. It's 66th Avenue now ..."

(Next: Following the death of Nathaniel Damon in 1899, the four sons disagree over whether they should modernize and motorize their San Leandro Bay sailing fleet. So, strangely, the business is allowed to collapse without any effort to sell. Damon's Landing is about a half a mile from San Leandro Bay proper. The family home on Damon Avenue has a "widow's walk" where a watch can be kept for incoming vessels of the family fleet)



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Instalment Thirty - San Leandro Bay

Grandson Nathaniel Damon says his grandfather's firm was known as N. Damon & Sons and they also operated a retail outlet at the intersection of Damon Avenue and San Leandro Road - the latter, now East 14th Street.

They sold hay, grain, coal and wood there. The elder Damon conducted a drayage business too and dealt in real estate.

"In 1904," the grandson recalls, "there was a dispute in the family about whether to modernize and motorize the fleet. My father wanted to keep up with the times and abandon sail but he was outvoted.

"Then a strange thing happened. No attempt was made to sell the going concern. They didn't even collect the bills owed.

"They just went out of business."

The grandson recalled that when his son, David, had a summer job on a rig sinking piling for the new Oakland Coliseum, he told him, "son, you may be driving piles right about where your great grandfather's Landing and business was."

Grandson Nathaniel Damon thinks his grandfather had five vessels but his sister, Mrs. Laura Tittermore of Pacific Grove, disagrees. She recalls only three and that number diminished, she said, when the railroad bought a large portion of the Damon land for right-of-way.

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Instalment Thirty, page 2, San Leandro Bay

Mrs. Tittlemore is a spry 87 and she well recalls playing around the Landing as a child.

"There were the docks," Mrs. Tittlemore recalled, "and three warehouses all painted white - one for hay, one for wheat and grain and one for wood and coal.

"I think the Landing was about a half a mile from San Leandro Bay. I know once I got paddled when I took a rowboat down the slough to the bay.

"My grandfather's two-story house was about a third of a mile or so from the Landing. It was painted gray with dark gray trim and had a verandah on the first floor and a balcony on the second.

"On the roof was a so-called 'widow's walk' where my grandfather or grandmother could go to see if the boats were coming in.

"Herbert was one of the ship captains; Joseph and George handled the wholesale trade at the Landing; and my father, Walter Damon, was in charge of the retail business on San Leandro Road.

"I remember there was a house at the Landing for one of the captains. The area in those days was just a vast expanse of marshlands and sloughs.

"There was a big windmill to supply water for the house and barn. I think there were two milk cows. Grandfather had about an acre or so in asparagus.

"Grandmother was a direct descendant of Marcus Whitman, martyred missionary who, with his wife and 12 others, were massacred by the Indians in Oregon in 1847."

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Instalment Thirty, page 3, San Leandro Bay

Both grandson and granddaughter agree that Nathaniel Damon was interested in trotting horses and may have owned a few. The Pacific Race Track was nearby and the grandson thinks Damon may have owned a minority interest in the trotting track.

(Next: Henry C. Clark, orphaned in infancy, establishes Clark's Landing on San Leandro Bay and operates a fleet of three sailing vessels and the Steamer Alice. He engages in teaming, farming, real estate and reduction works operation. In 1874, as much as \$6000 worth of silver bricks a week leaves the shores of San Leandro Bay for the U. S. Mint.)



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Instalment Thirty-One - San Leandro Bay

Scant information is available about the other San Leandro Bay shipping pioneer, Henry C. Clark, who established Clark's Landing. He had no children and died in 1890.

According to Guinn, he was born in Miami County, Ohio on December 26, 1831 and was orphaned in infancy. In 1850, he joined a party of 80 crossing the plains with ox teams. In six months, he arrived in Sacramento where he worked as a clerk for two years before coming to Alameda County.

He spent a half a year or so in the San Lorenzo area in agricultural pursuits and in January, 1853, purchased 14 acres in the Melrose area at the northeast end of San Leandro Bay where he soon established his Landing, acquiring three sailing vessels. Later, he added the Steamer Alice to the fleet.

It is interesting to note that about the time that Clark was acquiring the Steamer "Alice," the first faltering steps toward linking up San Antonio Creek with San Leandro Bay to create the estuary were being taken.

Surveys were undertaken in 1873 and the first ground was broken in 1889.

But if that rate of progress seemed slow, consider the fact that through a halting process of stop-and-go construction, the estuary was not cut through until 1902! Congress, in its traditional laggard ways, frequently would omit budgeting for construction for a year or two at a time. Alameda County, Oakland and Alameda evidently

more--

Instalment Thirty-One, page 2, San Leandro Bay

didn't have much "clout" in the halls of Congress in those days.

In addition to managing the shipping business, Clark engaged in teaming, farming, smelter operation and the sale of real estate. He even became postmaster for the area shortly before he died.

In October, 1868, he married Joan ("Josie") Kimball.

In 1874, about the time that the Pacific Cordage Works opened, Clark purchased the land at Old Alameda Point above High Street on San Leandro Bay which had been occupied by the borax works. There he established a wharf to accommodate shippers who utilized the Alice.

Sunday, September 13, 1874 was unlucky for Clark.

At 11:30 p.m. fire roared through the Landing destroying a 60 by 80-foot warehouse which contained 500 bales of straw, 1500 sacks of oats, 70 tons of hay, \$1200 worth of furniture and three tons of salt for the Pacific Reduction Works.

Seven years later, Clark acquired the Reduction Works at Melrose which processed gold and silver ores. Confusingly, the plant was also known as the Melrose Reduction Works over the years.

In 1874, the plant had Golconda overtones, reducing 20 to 35 tons of lead, silver and gold-bearing ore daily from Eureka, Nevada. In June of that year, for instance, in one week some \$6000 in silver bricks left the shores of San Leandro Bay for the San Francisco Mint.

The plant was built by Mainham, Cushtrel and Bandmann. Bandmann was better known as the Pacific Coast agent for Nobel's Giant Powder or dynamite.

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Instalment Thirty-One, page 3, San Leandro Bay

Over the years, the name mutations of the Pacific Reduction Works apparently included these: the Melrose Metallurgical Works and the Melrose Smelting and Refining Works. Under the former name in 1878-79, J. O. Stewart was president and Almarin B. Paul, Comstock Lode mining pioneer, was secretary. Under the latter name, in 1891, a year after Clark's death, Whittier, Fuller and Company, were the owners.

Whittier, Fuller and Company also bid in the Castle Dome Smelting and Refining Works at Melrose in 1885 at a sheriff's foreclosure sale for a bargain price of \$27,500.

(Next: A substantial industrial complex begins to grow on the shores of San Leandro Bay. A fuse works settles there in 1867 near Damon's Landing because a Cornish pastor is concerned about losses of life among his parishioners in the tin mines. He invents safety fuse and the Ensign, Bickford Company is founded)



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#### Instalment Thirty-Two - San Leandro Bay

A substantial industrial complex was beginning to develop around San Leandro Bay and the California Reduction Works were opened at Damon's Landing.

More activity was to come.

The solicitude of a part-time clergyman in Tuckingmill, Cornwall, England, some 6,000 miles away, for parishioners who were "going to glory" or being maimed by premature mine explosions led ultimately to the establishment of a branch safety fuse company near the shores of San Leandro Bay.

The branch was founded in October, 1867, close to Damon's Landing to be handy to water transportation, as the western division of the Toy, Bickford Company which later became the Ensign, Bickford Company. Finally, in 1903, through a merger of four safety fuse firms, it emerged as the Coast Manufacturing and Supply Company which ultimately removed to Livermore in 1914.

The Rev. William Bickford, who obtained the basic patents on safety fuse on September 6, 1831, was a leather merchant who became a Bible-thumping pastor on the Sabbath.

Aside from the empty pews which he inevitably saw in the wake of some tin mine disaster, he was genuinely concerned, as a humanitarian, about the compelling need for a reliable and safe fuse that would detonate a charge within a predictable time.

The oldest form of igniter in the Cornish tin mines had been the simple black powder train; then came straws filled with

more--

Instalment Thirty-Two, page 2, San Leandro Bay  
pulverized black powder.

Considered an important advance was the use of imported Irish goose quills, the tubular parts of which were cut to various lengths. If the hole containing the charge was a deep one, the "cousin Jacks" would insert a smaller quill into the larger one preceding it and so on until the desired length was reached.

This makeshift fuse was hazardous in the extreme. If the upper quill slipped out of the lower one, powder might leak out as the miner was tamping home the charge. A friction spark could cause premature ignition and a fatal explosion.

Also, the quill fuses burned erratically so they were precarious and chancy to use. Sometimes they burned slowly; sometimes fast.

As he lay down the Good Book to set his inventive mind to the problem, the Rev. Mr. Bickford decided that what was needed was a thin, continuous protected core of powder along which the sparks might travel at a uniform, determinate rate of speed.

Although he had no scientific training, the Cornish pastor received the inspiration that led to his invention when he went to the local "rope walk" to visit a friend.

As he watched the strands being twisted into rope, he thought: "If a funnel filled with gunpowder could be fixed so as to pour a steady stream into the twisted strands" perhaps a safer fuse would be the outcome.

His invention - crude at first - consisted of winding a slow-burning material such as jute around a string of powder

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Instalment Thirty-Two, page 3, San Leandro Bay

leading to the charge. It worked well enough to merit issuance of a patent.

As someone remarked later, referring to the invention of safety fuse, "a damned Cornishman discovered it in a rope walk."

(Next: The Ensign, Bickford Company branch fuse works at San Leandro Bay is merged into the Coast Manufacturing and Supply Company in 1903 and is finally absorbed by the Hexcel Corporation in 1968. A 64-round bare-knuckles prize fight at San Leandro Bay is held in July, 1887, and is described as "the most brutal contest that ever took place in the county.")



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Instalment Thirty-Three - San Leandro Bay

It was 110 years ago that Lemuel S. Ellsworth and William Whitehead established the little branch fuse works in the marsh-lands near San Leandro Bay after noting that cheap water transportation was available.

The firm remained near the foot of Damon Avenue - perhaps a half mile from the Landing - for 46 years.

After moving to Livermore, the firm branched out into the manufacture of glass fiber cloth and incorporated a line of ski, fishing and pole vaulting poles as well as fishing rods.

It was in May of 1968 that James A. Merritt, president of Coast Manufacturing and Supply Company, announced that the shareholders had approved a merger with the Hexcel Corporation. Merritt still lives in Pleasanton.

Albert H. Merritt, lived on Damon Avenue near the plant in the early days of its existence. He was the vice president then and R. H. Ensign was the president.

The Ensign, Bickford Company still lives on in Simsbury, Conn., as a subsidiary of Hexcel.

That the Rev. William Bickford's contribution to the industry and safety had not been forgotten was attested to in 1936, when, on the 100th anniversary of the founding of the firm, the Directors adopted a resolution paying "grateful and affectionate respect to the memory of a little known yet very great benefactor of the human race." It also alluded to the "humanitarian interests, the foresight, the courage and the perserverance of this industrial pioneer."

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Instalment Thirty-Three, page 2, San Leandro Bay

What was described in the newspapers as "the most brutal contest that ever took place in this county," occurred in the "old smelter" at Melrose near San Leandro Bay on July 7, 1887. The site may have been the old Castle Dome plant which had been in financial difficulties.

The bare-knuckles prize fighters were Joseph Cooper of Visalia who weighed in at 132 pounds and Jack Higgins of Ohio who weighed 160. Cooper won in 64 rounds that consumed 2 1/2 hours. The purse was \$250.

One headline read: "64 Rounds; A Brutal Battle at Alameda."

As one reporter put it, "the 100 spectators who contributed their quota to the purse, were amply repaid if the length of the fight and brutality count."

"At an hour when the average policeman may be safely counted upon as being wrapped in the arms of Morpheus," a San Francisco newspaper (Chronicle) reported, "a very small and select party started yesterday morning for what is known as the 'old smelter ....'"

Picking up the account, the Alameda Argus wrote that "the principals had been assured that Alameda police would not interfere ..." It was out of their jurisdiction.

"The first 25 rounds (a knockdown constituted a round) were pretty even," the Argus wrote, "both men being badly punished, their faces being terribly battered .... Cooper was knocked down several times but it seemed to agree with him for after the 26th round, he seemed to gain his second wind ..."

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Instalment Thirty-Three, page 3, San Leandro Bay

"It was in the 64th round that Cooper hit Higgins a swinging right hander which landed on the latter's jugular.

"Higgins dropped like a log to the ground ...

He was finally revived and the fight was awarded to Cooper."

(Next: "Market hunters" on San Leandro Bay slaughter waterfowl with large gauge swivel or punt guns. In the 1911-12 hunting season, it is estimated 250,000 ducks shot in San Francisco Bay and all its dependent bays and tributaries, are sold to avaricious Bay Area restaurant and hotel proprietors through five San Francisco "game transfer" companies)



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#### Instalment Thirty-Four - San Leandro Bay

San Leandro Bay became a waterfowl abattoir in the years before the turn of the century and beyond and greedy market hunters with swivel guns resembling artillery pieces, mounted on work boats, wrought massacre among the ducks and geese.

Terry Y. La Croix, Sr. pioneer Alameda resident with a wealth of stories about the "old days," recalls seeing some of the market hunters on San Leandro Bay and stored away many stories that were told to him in his youth by others.

"Some of the muzzle-loading swivel or punt guns on the work boats used by the market hunters had barrels two and three inches in diameter," he recalled. "They looked like one of the 'monitors' used in hydraulic mining.

"They'd fill them with all kinds of junk hardware - nuts, bolts, 'punch-outs' from boiler plate, washers and the like. A 12-gauge gun would look like a pea-shooter beside them.

"And when they were fired! It was the booming cannonade of thunder!"

La Croix recalls that there were at least 30 tripod-supported duck blinds in the bay and even a few floating blinds where the hunters lay in ambush.

Two well-known Alameda County forty-niners who rounded the Horn to get to California and plied shotguns in the market hunting trade briefly, were Moses Wicks and Thomas W. Mulford. It is believed they hunted in San Pablo Bay where thousands of ducks awaited slaughter as they floated placidly on the waters. Later, according to an

more--

Instalment Thirty-Four, page 2, San Leandro Bay

Oakland newspaper (Tribune) they became owners and "operators of oyster beds in the shallow shoals of San Leandro Bay." While there were extensive oyster beds in San Leandro Bay it seems more likely that Wicks' and Mulford's operations took place off the shores of the present City of San Leandro. "Mulford Gardens," nearby, derives its name from the East Bay pioneer.

The waters off San Leandro may have been known, parochially, as "San Leandro Bay" also.

In the 1911-12 hunting season, the State Fish and Game Department estimated, 250,000 ducks were sold to avaricious Bay Area hotel and restaurant proprietors through the five San Francisco "game transfer" companies and San Leandro Bay contributed a sizeable share.

An editorial in Western Field in January, 1912, judged that of an estimated 15,000 ducks shipped to market during the first week of the season, more than half spoiled or were dumped into the bay.

Meanwhile, ducks and geese that escaped the waterborne slaughter in San Leandro Bay fell prey to the crafty "bull hunters" in the grain fields along its perimeter. These men, armed with two, four and eight gauge guns and utilizing an "animal blind" maneuvered to within almost point-blank range and wrought waterfowl butchery among the sitting birds.

The book "Game Birds of California" authored by Grinnell, Bryant and Storer reported that "a market hunter and two assistants (using animal blinds) killed 400 ducks with six shots from four gauge guns." The place was not specified.

more--

Instalment Thirty-Four, page 3, San Leandro Bay

(Next: The "persecution of the gun" and its effect on waterfowl. Bombardments "like a naval engagement." Selling game is the villain in the piece. San Leandro Bay waterfowl slaughter is substantial)



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Instalment Thirty-Five - San Leandro Bay

Continuing the overall discussion of the hunting of waterfowl in California and San Leandro Bay, "Game Birds of California" reported that as early as 1883, the "persecution of the gun" was beginning to take its toll.

And the 1910 issue of the Overland Monthly in an article alluding to "murderously-bent gunners," wrote:

"Surrounds were made by a flotilla of boats and the hunted birds were given a bombardment that sounded more like a naval engagement than duck hunting. Long-range shooting wounded more birds than were bagged.

"This questionable system soon became an abuse. The conditions of this pursuit eliminated all phases of legitimate sport and what was of more importance, the incessant harrying of the birds threatened to drive them away entirely ..."

Legislative action soon prohibited the pursuit or hunting of waterfowl by motorboat but the magazine reported that "sailboats have but little difficulty in working up into range, particularly so with canvasbacks which bird, by the way, is exceedingly stupid at times."

Western Field charged that the "bag limit is being openly violated" and added:

"Just as long as there is a price on the head of every wild duck in California, just so long will there be no chance to save the remnant of that duck's kind ...

more---

Instalment Thirty-Five, page 2, San Leandro Bay

"Market hunting has got to stop. 'No sale' is worth all the other prohibitions that can be put into a game law."

In a similar vein, "Game Birds of California," wrote that "government authorities are right in saying that 'free marketing of wild game leads swiftly to extermination,'" and added:

"Sale of game on the open market has been fundamentally, the most important factor in reducing California's supply of game birds. So great has been the depletion from this source in past years that it has been found necessary to prohibit sale of all kinds except ducks and geese.

"They should be removed from the list too.  
... All neighboring states prohibit it.

"Were it not for certain San Francisco cafe and hotel men who reap a rich harvest from the retailing of game, California would have done likewise in 1913."

Wholesalers eliminated the necessity for market hunters to go from restaurant to restaurant and hotels and ships to sell their wildfowl wares.

These San Francisco firms dealt in literally thousands of birds accompanied by clouds of feathers:

The American Game Transfer Company, the Independent Game Transfer Company, the Hunters' Game Transfer Company, the Market and Game Transfer Company and the Retailers Game Transfer Company.

The Overland Monthly wistfully recalled the day when flights of ducks and geese darkened the sky and a flight of ducks "100 yards wide came on in a seemingly endless stream ... that took 15 to 20 minutes to pass..."

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Instalment Thirty-Five, page 3, San Leandro Bay

(Next: The pitiless "bull hunter", who stalks his prey behind an animal blind and then fires at the sitting birds at almost point-blank range with two, four and eight gauge guns, killing hundreds at a shot. Market hunting comes to a long-overdue end in 1918 and San Leandro Bay is declared a water-fowl refuge in 1931. Oyster farming in San Leandro Bay. Oyster bed "claim jumping" in 1905)



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Instalment Thirty-Six - San Leandro Bay

Because of the singular nature of the technique, "Game Birds of California" devoted extra space to a discussion of "bull hunters" who often threatened the lives of game wardens. The authors wrote in part:

"The type of market hunter who, in former days, took the largest toll of wild fowl, used an animal blind in approaching his quarry.

"This 'bull hunter,' as he was called, proceeded to the hunting grounds leading a trained steer or cow. After a good-sized flock of ducks or geese had been located, he proceeded to 'walk a shot.'

"Moving along behind the animal, which was easily guided, he approached the birds by a process of 'tacking,' each 'tack' bringing him nearer his game ...

"Throughout the process of 'walking the shot,' which required an average of two or three hours, an attempt was made to bunch or 'bank' the birds as much as possible.

"When the birds were finally in proper position, the hunter whistled, whereupon the birds would raise their heads; then, aiming over the back of the animal with his large bore gun or automatic and bracing himself for the recoil, he fired the first shot or shots while the birds were sitting ... The resulting slaughter was simply enormous ...

"Men employing 'animal blinds' continually threatened the lives of those who attempted to enforce the law."

more--

Instalment Thirty-Six, page 2, San Leandro Bay

Market hunting came to an end with the signing of the Migratory Bird Treaty in 1918. And in 1931, the San Leandro Waterfowl Refuge, encompassing San Leandro Bay, was created by the legislature. Unfortunately, it did not address itself to the matter of filling the bay and adjacent marshlands.

Politics had a macho image in 1876 and as a footnote to market hunting, the August 19, issue of the Encinal carried an advertisement headed "Political! Big Gun!"

The copy, figuratively sputtering sparks and fulminations, read:

"\$100 will buy an artillery field piece (English Six Pounder) with carriage complete. Just the thing for firing salutes, either Democratic or Republican. For particulars of where the cannon may be seen, apply Encinal office."

Was this some leftover from Chancellorsville or Gettysburg or, mayhap, the War of 1812? Politics was a serious affair in 1876.

While it appears that San Francisco Bay waters on the northern shore of Bay Farm Island were most favorable for oyster farming, there were extensive beds in San Leandro Bay also and in April, 1879, for instance, John Hamlin and associates filed a claim for a 640-acre oyster bed there.

Oyster bed operators on the northern shores of Bay Farm Island included the pioneering J. S. Morgan and his Morgan Oyster Company and Swanberg and West.

Often, under scudding skies, oyster pirates plied their furtive trade along Alameda County's south shore and, no doubt,

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in San Leandro Bay and by May, 1905, the Pacific Fisherman reported that "claim jumping" was occurring off San Leandro and shotgun-toting guards manned the barges. There is pictorial proof of this. Two years earlier, the San Francisco Morning Call had reported that clashes had occurred between antagonistic oystermen.

"So bitter is the feud between the rival companies which claim the beds," the Pacific Fisherman wrote, "that shotgun guards have been employed to hold the contested claims ..."

(Next: "Oyster farming" begins in San Francisco Bay in 1849. J. S. Morgan who "farms" on the north shore of Bay Farm Island, is a pioneer. In 1899, probably 2,000,000 pounds of oysters are tonged or raked out of San Francisco Bay and all its tributaries. During the period 1910-20, pollution increases and the oysters vanish. Much of the early activity is around Alameda)



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Instalment Thirty-Seven - San Leandro Bay

Oyster "farming" began in San Francisco Bay in 1849 at the height of the gold rush. Hungry miners starting out on their pactolian adventures and those returning with a "stake" wanted the best and were willing to pay for it.

According to a detailed story in a San Francisco newspaper (Chronicle) the pioneer was J. S. Morgan who arrived here in '49 with an "oystering outfit." The local bay oysters (*Ostrea lurida*) were very small and so Morgan and others sailed to Shoalwater Bay, Wash., in 1851 to investigate the larger oysters grown there.

No doubt, the oyster trade invaded San Leandro Bay not long after.

In March, 1852, Morgan brought the first ship-load of Shoalwater Bay oysters back to San Francisco Bay and they were planted. Smaller than the Eastern or Atlantic Coast oysters (*Ostrea virginica*) nevertheless, they were of excellent flavor and "a sack brought two Spanish ounces or \$32."

The story continued that at the time "San Francisco had a monopoly on the oyster business on the Pacific Coast" and large shipments were being made to Salt Lake City, Mexico, China and Japan.

In the peak year - probably 1899 - some 2,000,000 pounds of oysters were tonged or raked out of bay waters and it was described as "a million dollar business," a thumping figure in those days.

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It was an era when broadcloth-tailored magnificoes and nabobs on Nob Hill gave hardly a thought to consuming a couple dozen "saddle rocks" for lunch and washing them down with a jeroboam, more or less, of Bollinger Brut. Saloon free lunch counters received their share of oysters too.

The fast-disappearing "good years" for oyster farming on the bay were roughly from 1889 to 1904. Then, gradually, pollution, which no one gave a thought to in those carefree days, increased and the oysters vanished during the period 1910-20.

The first inkling that all might not be well with the oyster farming industry in the vicinity of Alameda and Bay Farm Island came in September, 1887, when the Argus reported that the Morgan Oyster Company was moving its operations from the north shore of Bay Farm Island to the vicinity of Millbrae in San Mateo County.

"The northerly shore of Bay Farm Island," the Argus reported, "has been the home of the oyster for many years. When first planted there, the bivalve seemed to thrive well and the San Francisco market received its greatest supply from that locality.

"Lately, the shores have commenced to shoal, making the oyster business unremunerative ..."

The story added that three sloops were engaged in removal work.

Fourteen years earlier, the Alameda Encinal had carried a much more optimistic story about oystering.

"Alameda promises to become an important point for the growing and cultivation of oysters. Parties long engaged in

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the business have recently purchased some of the tidelands lying in Alameda Bay (presumably the area off Alameda's south shore) and have already commenced to plant extensively.

"The Schooner B. F. Lee, Capt. J. J. Winant, has just brought from Shoalwater Bay, a cargo of about 500 baskets for the Washington Oyster Company - a company formed by the oystermen of Shoalwater Bay, who are interested in the business there - and have formed themselves into a cooperative company for the purpose of marketing their oysters in San Francisco. J. J. Winant is their agent.

"The Pacific Oyster Company, whose beds are at present located at Oakland, has also purchased land and will remove to this place ...

"So the prospect is that Alameda Bay will soon contain the most extensive oyster beds in the state."

(Next: In 1873, oyster shipments from Alameda are brisk. Did Jack London sail in San Leandro Bay and participate there in both "oyster pirating" and fish patrol work against the law violators? More than likely. He plays both sides of the street off the north shore of Bay Farm Island and off San Leandro. Stolen eastern oysters at 15 cents a dozen)



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Instalment Thirty-Eight - San Leandro Bay

Newspaper stories continued to recount the activity in oyster farming and marketing near the Alameda shores and in December, 1872, the Encinal reported that Capt. J. J. Winant had acquired 30 acres of Bay Farm Island tidelands for oyster culture.

It is safe to assume that San Leandro Bay was not being ignored during all this activity.

In 1873 the year the Encinal carried its euphoric story about oysters it noted in November that "we ship to San Francisco daily some 30 sacks of prime Shoalwater Bay oysters besides a dozen or more boxes of luscious eastern transplants, cultivated by the Pacific Oyster Company from plants grown in Newark, N. J. bay. The oyster beds located at the margin of Bay Farm Island are a grand success."

Five days later, the shipment included 40 sacks of Shoalwaters plus 31 boxes and two sacks of Lynnhavens.

In May, 1882, the Argus carried the electrifying news that E. A. Lawrence of Bay Farm Island had discovered in one of the sloughs near his place 25 dozen small and three large eastern oysters, from three to seven years old, indicating that they were propagating.

This was news indeed since the eastern variety seemed unable to propagate in its new surroundings. The bubble burst a few days later when a man came forward and said he had "planted" the mature oysters there.

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Jack London, who may well have sailed a succession of his craft into San Leandro Bay and joined the "oyster pirates" seeking excitement - and material for a book - wrote about it all in "The Cruise of the Dazzler" (Century Company, 1902) and the "Tales of the Fish Patrol" (M. A. Donahue Company, 1905).

In "The Cruise of the Dazzler" - a boat he bought with \$300 in borrowed funds - he was the Prince of Oyster Pirates. Later, he deserted the "Frisco Kid," as well as "Barchi" of the Sporting Life Gang, the "Centipede" and the "Porpoise," to become an interim lawman with the State Fish Patrol.

The change in roles was probably not without hazard. Oyster pirates were a treacherous crew, many of whom died young in waterfront brawls, gunfights with oyster bed watchmen or even on the gibbet.

It was because of their activities that San Francisco street peddlers - "the men with the sack" - might sidle up to you and say "want some nice eastern oysters on the half shell? Only 15 cents a dozen."

In "Tales of the Fish Patrol," London tells of Taft, a San Francisco oyster bed owner, who related how the oyster pirates "have robbed my beds; torn down my signs; terrorized my watchmen; and last year killed one of them .... All done in the blackness of night.

"All I had was a dead watchman and no evidence."

London relates that he and a "Greek boy named Nicholas" while working as Fish Patrol deputy patrolmen, insinuated

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themselves into the ranks of the "oyster pirates" and heard them curse an oyster bed watchman and yell: "You'd better slide out of this here or we'll fill you so full of holes you wouldn't float in molasses."

As a result of the assistance provided by London and his companion, 29 men were taken into custody.

"Taft" had offered \$50 a head for anyone taken into custody so if he kept his word, the temporary game wardens netted \$1450 out of the night's work.

Since London's current sailboat, the "Reindeer," was well known, he had chartered a "big, flat-bottomed, square-sterned craft, sloop-rigged," for the job which he dubbed "Coal Tar Maggie."

(Next: Ah Sam's "celestial ghost" hovers over the Bay Farm Island Bridge in 1893. A flash over the span and a mysterious splashing sound. "Old Dad," a reputed pirate and his rumored buried gold, also not far from the bridge. After he is safely lodged in the insane asylum, treasure hunters with all sorts of exotic gear dig, and dig and dig)



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Instalment Thirty-Nine - San Leandro Bay

The haunting of the Bay Farm Island Bridge - western portal to San Leandro Bay - in 1893 in the wake of the strange death of Ah Sam, fascinated the editors of the Argus.

An inspired head writer penned: "Celestial Ghost; Bay Farm's Spirit of Murdered Chinaman."

The haunted area, it developed, was confined to the bridge and an old storehouse nearby and Chinese clam diggers who had worked in the area for years were avoiding it like the plague.

Even Ralph Hamlin, the bridge tender, admitted he was disturbed and conceded he had seen a horrid apparition in a swirling fog near the bridge on several nights.

A veritable Paladin, Hamlin was unwilling to take a back seat in the matter of valor and true grit to anyone, however, his partner, "Old John," had gone on record repeatedly that he was unafraid of ghosts. Moreover, "Old John" had volunteered to patrol the span "swinging a lantern and singing cheerily."

Hamlin felt it would be churlish of him to reject such a magnificent offer.

At the toot of a midnight horn, signaling that a boat was approaching, "Old John" responded.

"He was arrested by a moaning sound as if it came from a departed spirit," the Argus reported. "Old John" beat a hasty retreat to seek reinforcements.

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When they, in turn, saw the blood-curdling apparition, the story said, they fled.

"As they did," the Argus continued, "there was a flash over the bridge and then a splashing sound as if something had fallen into the bay."

The Argus offered no eerie epilog to the macabre San Leandro Bay story.

Another weird chapter in the "Tales of San Leandro Bay" involved an eccentric old English sailor known only as "Old Dad" who, furtive rumor had it, was a quondam pirate who had buried untold sums of gold.

He settled on the marsh about 200 yards west of the first bridge on the road to Bay Farm Island in 1853 and "he became a dealer in junk," the Encinal reported "and his cabin was notorious as a receptacle of all kinds of truck."

"Old Dad" was not your swashbuckling, cutlass-weilding pirate - if, indeed he had ever been one. One of his non-pirate-like habits was to sally out for a morning walk along the beach each day "dressed in a flaming morning wrapper,"

The boys of the time, the Encinal declared, agreed "Old Dad" was crazy.

And, indeed he was, for in 1856 he disappeared and in 1870's it developed that he had died in the looney bin - the Stockton State Hospital.

That brings us up to June, 1877, when the Encinal reported that not long after "Old Dad's" disappearance in 1856,

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neighbors began to notice "nocturnal visitors coming from the direction of San Francisco, who, after drawing their boats upon the beach, would proceed to dig around where 'Old Dad's' cabin stood ..." They departed, disillusioned treasure seekers.

(Next: "Scientific" treasure hunters with a divining rod and pumps. They dig for "Old Dad's" pirate treasure for two months or so and leave empty-handed. The May, 1879, landmark excursion and picnic of the renowned Sarsfield Guards. It was a three-ring circus)



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Instalment Forty - San Leandro Bay

A more determined assault on the shades and rumored riches of "Old Dad," the Alameda pirate, began in May, 1877, when uneasy neighbors reported another dead-of-the night visitation to the beach-side site - this time by three men.

"One night, a week and a half ago," the Encinal reporter wrote, "three men were seen 100 yards in the rear of the residence of W. D. Haralson at Old Alameda Point, prancing around with an instrument which greatly resembled a large-sized glove stretcher or a giant compass.

"Upon inquiry, it was found that this queer looking instrument was a divining rod and the parties using it were seeking for the golden treasure."

The intrepid fortune seekers were Messrs. Heath, Vance and Cleveland and they confidently predicted they would find gold when their shaft was 15 feet deep.

The Encinal editors were fascinated and provided weekly progress bulletins.

For instance, on June 9 they reported that the work was "progressing slowly;" a lift pump had been emplaced; and a "gang of Chinamen were on the job.

"The 'professor' who engineers the divining rod says that the treasure shaft is sinking at the rate of two feet a day."

The reporter - a smart aleck obviously -  
added:

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Instalment Forty, page 2, San Leandro Bay

"We hope they get it - the money we mean."

By July 7, there had been a cave-in but the prospectors were prepared to dig down 24 feet and a double force of men were working day and night.

This was the Encinal's final report - presumably because there was no more news - but it added that the fortune seekers were prepared to dig "until the long-looked-for treasure is reached - or they strike China."

Perhaps in this segment of the story is the appropriate place to mention that some enterprising boys found a coffin floating in San Leandro Bay which had fallen in nonchalant fashion off a South Pacific Coast Railroad freight train. It was bound from San Jose to San Francisco and the thoughtful boys moored the "six-foot bungalow" to a handy piling.

Under the heading of miscellany, about the same time the carcass of a 35-foot whale drifted in the bay. The stench was unbearable.

Episodes occurred on the South Pacific Coast Railroad trains which crossed San Leandro Bay on a mile-long trestle that would probably not have met with the wholehearted approbation of Saint Leander, the 6th century Bishop of Seville after whom the Bay was ostensibly named.

It is not likely, for instance, that South Pacific Coast Railroad crews - and, for that matter, Alameda residents - would ever forget the May 17, 1879, excursion and picnic of the renowned Sarsfield Guards of San Francisco. It was described as a curious blend of

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Hallowe'en in a mad house, the best features of the long-departed "hell week" on campus and the crossing of the equator on shipboard. Elevated depravity from adultery to zoophilia was the keynote.

The picnic special was, no doubt, preceded down the tracks by the South Pacific Coast's crack Santa Cruz flyer, "The Dandy" which boasted a Hutchinson Smoke Consumer on the locomotive's shotgun stack and had two of the "elegant parlor coaches" in its consist. The canary yellow cars, outshopped from the Wilmington, Del., works expressly for the road, were "six feet longer than the ordinary cars," and upholstered in vociferous red and green plush.

(Next: The Sarsfield Guards picnic -- "the most disgraceful hoodlum affair on record." On the following Monday, "one dead man and one with a broken leg were found along the track" in the wake of the picnic special. In the field of advanced bedlam, the San Francisco Cigar Maker's Union picnic in April, 1887, was hard to beat. Twenty-two were jailed at San Jose. Picnickers threw rocks at cowering Alameda residents from the tops of the cars)



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Instalment Forty-One - San Leandro Bay

The May, 1879 South Pacific Coast Railroad special, especially primed from pilot to running lights for the Sarsfield Guards was soon filled with as choice a crew of Jack Nasties, bravos and bruisers as were ever assembled in railroad cars.

As the narrow gauge train headed south over the San Leandro Bay trestle, the casual observer might have imagined it was a road company from the nethermost depths of the Barbary Coast.

The Argus editors seemed more than usually exercised about the excursion and wrote that it "enjoys the distinction of being the most disgraceful hoodlum affair on record.

"From the time they embarked on the ferry boat in the morning until they returned at 10 o'clock in the evening, they inspired a reign of terror among all decent people with whom they came in contact.

"They are represented as having taken San Jose by storm and word was telegraphed to Alameda during the day for a posse to board the train at Park Street and arrest some of the rioters.....

"A person who was on the train represents to us that the scene was almost indescribable.

"The grossest lewdness was indulged in by both sexes and human life was in constant peril by flying missiles and weapons in the hands of the drunken cutthroats ...

"On Monday morning, one dead man and one with a broken leg were found along the track. At the ferry slip, one

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Instalment Forty-One, page 2, San Leandro Bay  
or two men fell overboard but were rescued."

Indeed, on August 27, 1893, the Argus reported that the body of J. Reilly, 47, had been found floating in San Leandro Bay near the South Pacific Coast Railroad trestle and the assumption was that "he fell off a picnic train." The news made hardly a ripple.

South Pacific Coast track walkers had long ago accustomed themselves to find anything from human bodies to picnic wounded amidst a grand litter of square-faced bottles along the right-of-way in the wake of one of these excursions. One official had seriously suggested that an ambulance or hearse - or both - routinely follow track walkers on Monday as they made their rounds.

If the Sarsfield Guards picnic and excursion approached organized chaos, the true piece montee in the field of advanced bedlam and anarchy was the San Francisco Cigar Makers Union picnic on April 3, 1887.

"Fifty carloads of picnickers under the auspices of the Cigar Makers Union of San Francisco," the Argus wrote, "visited San Jose last Sunday by the narrow gauge road and before they left for home, the people of the Garden City knew what the invasion of the Roman Empire by the Goths and Vandals was like.

"The police force was unable to cope with the barbarians though 22 of them landed in jail ...

"On the way home, as the train passed through Alameda the hoodlums cut up the most outrageous antics.

"They fired off pistols and broke windows, smashing the glass in the ticket office at Park Street by throwing rocks

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from the roofs of the cars ....

"The average Sunday picnic ceased some  
time ago to be much more than an orgy."

It was rumored that the long-suffering  
citizens of San Jose were clamoring for an ordinance that would prohibit  
South Pacific Coast picnic specials from stopping in San Jose and, as an  
added precaution, enforce the sealing of all the cars as they passed  
through the city.

Survivors who staggered off the excursion  
cars combing banana peels and watermelon rinds out of their clothing and  
stumbling over loose bottles presented a general aspect that suggested  
they were deserters from the Union army after the debacle at Bull Run.

(Next: The Sunday School picnic for 1100 is a big success; likewise  
the Hunters' Specials. The South Pacific Coast Railroad transports state  
asylum patients from Stockton to the "new" facilities at Agnews in 1888)



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Instalment Forty-Two - San Leandro Bay

Providentially, the Allied Sunday School picnic of May 21, 1887, was an entirely different affair from the al fresco railroad train bashes of the Sarsfield Guards and the San Francisco Cigar Makers' Union.

Some 1100 youngsters piled into 22 South Pacific Coast Railroad cars for an excursion to the Santa Cruz redwoods.

The Argus reported the sanctified affair a "pronounced success."

The famed "hunters' specials" also crossed the San Leandro Bay trestle in season, bound for the Southern Alameda marshes and the cars bristled with double-barreled shotguns, hunters attired in deerstalker caps and checked ratcatcher coats of articulate pattern as well as extremely vocal dogs.

The Encinal wrote in November, 1885, that the trains "suggest a vast consumption of powder and shot, numerous wettings, increased appetites and weariness and, in many cases, no doubt, indifferent results as to the contents of the game bags."

In November, 1888, the state began the transfer of 275 patients from the Stockton State Hospital to "the new asylum for the chronic insane at Agnews" and they made the last part of their journey "to their new home" aboard the narrow gauge cars of the South Pacific Coast Railroad.

This, of course, entailed the crossing of the San Leandro Bay trestle and the Argus, which was not known for tact

Instalment Forty-Two, page 2, San Leandro Bay  
and sensitivity in such matters, headlined the story:

"A Load of Lunatics!"

The first contingent of 75 arrived at the  
Alameda ferry pier on the Steamer Caroline.

But by the time the second contingent arrived  
in Alameda on November 26, the Argus was staffing the story full-bore and  
its readers learned all sorts of obscure but recherche details about how  
a large state handled its dull-witted charges in transit.

"The second shipment of incurable lunatics to  
the new asylum for the chronic insane at Agnews took place last Monday,"  
the Argus reported.

"Preparations began at Stockton at 3 a.m. ..  
At 5 o'clock all the attendants turned out with torches and formed a line  
from the asylum to the six-car train.

"They were made to believe they were to be  
taken on a picnic and so they were on their good behavior."

The account said that in the contingent of  
200, there were 59 women and their asylum uniforms consisted of a brown  
cloak, gingham skirt, white and black cloth jackets, brown gingham sun-  
bonnet, heavy brogans and gray shaker-knit stockings.

"One woman," the Argus alertly reported,  
"made a dive to escape. She was committed from San Jose and threw her  
baby out of a window."

With the enthusiastic cooperation of the  
18 attendants, one doctor and two trustees, the Argus learned that "an  
old woman, also from San Jose, was the most violent of the lot. She

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Instalment Forty-Two, page 3, San Leandro Bay

imagines that she has just been crowned queen and that she is being deprived of her liberty to keep her from reigning ...

"One young woman had a large collar around her neck and was tightly strapped. She has a cannibalistic appetite," the Argus confided, "and if she can find no one else to eat, she eats herself.

"One man would drop down on his knees in the mud and throw up his hands with every step he took."

The Argus concluded with the style note that the men inmates wore loose pantaloons and small jackets of half-white cotton cloth.

(Next: The South Pacific Coast Railroad transports two bareknuckles prize fighters and the fancy to a makeshift ring near Alviso after authorities forbade the staging of the affair in Alameda County. "Mitchell" wins on a foul in 23 rounds. Antics on Park Street preceding the fight and on the cars on the return trip)



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Instalment Forty-Three - San Leandro Bay

There were other passengers on the South Pacific Coast narrow gauge cars who a frosty management would, undoubtedly, have preferred not to accommodate if the railroad wasn't a common carrier.

For instance, the Argus reported that "a detachment of plug-uglies and mug-uglies" was behind a scheme to stage a prize fight between one "Mitchell" and an unidentified opponent. They planned to take the South Pacific Coast "cars" across San Leandro Bay in a southern direction.

Mitchell ultimately won in 23 rounds on a foul in an improvised ring near Alviso after Alameda County authorities made it clear that they could "not profane the soil of Alameda County with their brutal exhibition."

The preliminary chapters in the improbable affair were written "when the crowd of pugilists marched up Park Street" toward the station to catch the 9:05 through train.

It developed that a "headless chicken" show was in progress in a tent on Park Street and a big Scotch bagpiper was providing what passed for music.

When "Mitchell" and his ringside acolytes appeared, the bagpiper "deserted the tented and headless wonder and joined the plug uglies, who very soon had him playing his liveliest airs in the barroom of the Park Hotel. They were whiling away the time till the through train arrived in grotesque imitations of the Highland Fling."

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As a precaution, to make certain that prize fighting, a felony, did not take place in Alameda County, Deputy Jamieson was detailed to accompany the fancy at least until they crossed the county line.

"They got off the train at Newark despite their promises, where a ring was pitched," the Argus reported. "Deputy Sheriff Jamieson forebade their fighting there.

"Finally, they chartered an extra train and went a few miles beyond Alviso into Santa Clara County where there was no one to interfere.

"Here," the Argus continued, "they pitched their ring and fought a very exciting battle. Deputy Jamieson went along but, it being beyond his jurisdiction, he was simply a spectator ..."

Jamieson, who didn't have to contribute to the purse, left in the 21st round but said, impartially, that "it was a splendid fight." Clearly, Jamieson was a sportsman and official duties didn't cloud his assessment as a fan.

Possibly Jamieson knew something and decided the 21st round was a judicious time to depart.

For on the way home in the South Pacific Coast cars, the decision giving Mitchell the fight on a foul "seemed to engender ill-feelings between the admirers of the pugilists who engaged in fights and squabbles ... several times threatening a shooting melee.

"The conductor threatened repeatedly to cut loose with the engine and leave the cars out in the marshes (south of the San Leandro Bay trestle) if the crowd was not more orderly."

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Instalment Forty-Three, page 3, San Leandro Bay

The record is silent on the fate of the  
Scotch bagpiper.

(Next: A distraught lover commits suicide by leaping into San Leandro Bay from the South Pacific Coast Railroad trestle. A narrow gauge train averages 44 1/2 miles an hour on a fast trip for newsmen to San Jose. Was the first Bay Farm Island Bridge completed in January, 1875?)



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Instalment Forty-Four - San Leandro

The San Leandro Bay trestle also figured in a dolorous tale of love which ended, the Argus reported, on December 30, 1885, when Leon Vaudrey, a French gardener from San Francisco and a man of expansive ways, leaped into the bay. He died shortly afterward in an Oakland Hospital.

It seems, the Argus said, that Vaudrey was paying court to lovely Josephine Craffe, 23, a twice-wed brunette and managed to create the impression that he was wealthy.

He told her, the paper continued, that he would buy some real estate from her father for \$5000; that he was negotiating for two blocks in East Oakland; and that he guessed he'd buy 100 acres near San Leandro.

Then, tragically on Christmas Eve, Josephine's mother died and the Argus related, the attentive Vaudrey volunteered to underwrite the \$200 cost for the funeral.

About this time, it became necessary, as they say, for Vaudrey to put his money where his mouth was.

"It was either death or disgrace in the eyes of the woman he loved," the Argus reporter wrote poetically.

"He couldn't face Josephine.

"He could face death."

The South Pacific Coast's trestle spanning San Leandro Bay was a well-known landmark during its existence and on

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Instalment Forty-Four, page 2, San Leandro Bay

April 12, 1883, a special "varnish" bearing 20 San Francisco newspapermen on a promotional junket thundered across the waters, headed for San Jose. It was a plush excursion and "the elegant parlor car used by the Directors" was made available to cosset the newsmen.

The "eagle eye" in the cab must have been given orders to make time for the special averaged 44 1/2 miles an hour on the trip south, a cause for outrageous pride on the part of the train master, superintendent of motive power and other punctilious company types.

A year or two earlier, the Argus reported with considerable satisfaction that "the rule of the South Pacific Coast Railroad Company banishing Chinese passengers to the baggage cars relieves the traveling public, and especially the ladies, of a great deal of annoyance."

Around 1897, the center pier that supported the swing span of the railroad's San Leandro Bay trestle began to settle into the mud, affecting the rest of the structure. The solution lay in sinking the hulk of the dismantled 32-year-old Ferry Alameda alongside to serve as a crib for rocks and rip-rap.

So the bones of the old craft, whose decks were trodden by many a commuter, lie mouldering in the ooze of San Leandro Bay.

Equally important as the railroad trestle in affairs of San Leandro Bay was the Bay Farm Island Bridge.

It would appear, from accounts in the Alameda newspapers, that the first county-financed span was completed and

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accepted by the Board of Supervisors on January 9, 1875.

It was constructed by the Pacific Bridge Company; had a 745-foot span; an 18-foot roadway; and the draw was 122 feet long. This permitted a 50-foot channel for vessels. "One man can turn the draw with ease," the Encinal reported.

(Next: A saloon is promptly constructed at the Alameda end of the new Bay Farm Island bridge and "bathing" is prohibited within 100 yards of the span. Fishing is popular from the bridge. An evil wag jokes about nitroglycerine aboard the South Pacific Coast Railroad train. Parson Bovard is four-square against private social clubs)



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Instalment Forty-Five - San Leandro Bay

Buggies and horsemen had scarcely started using the newly-constructed Bay Farm Island Bridge in the new year of 1875 when an enterprising saloon keeper set up shop at the Alameda end.

"There is a saloon already in full blast ... in the building recently used as a borax factory," knowledgeable staffers on the Encinal reported.

An inventive bartender might, no doubt, have devised appropriate metaphorical names for the potables dealing with the saloon's provenance such as a Brandy and Borax (B&B) Borax Cooler and Borax Stinger. Tapsters were never at a loss what to pour in the '70's.

In May, 1882, the Alameda Board of Trustees passed an ordinance that no one could ride or drive on the draw portion of the span "at a gait faster than a walk." Violations drew a \$10 fine or five days in jail or both.

One curious development that followed in the wake of the completion of the bridge was that the vicinity became a favorite for "bathers" much "to the annoyance of the people living on the island and those whom pleasure or business induced to cross the bridge."

The city's Trustees took vigorous action.

They passed an ordinance making it illegal to bath within 100 yards of the bridge.

The Encinal's prose did not make it clear whether the annoying bathers were nude or otherwise.

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Instalment Forty-Five, page 2, San Leandro Bay

By August, 1887, the Argus was reporting that "the latest fad on the island is fishing by moonlight from the draw-bridge. The last moonlit night, a party of six caught 77 large smelt."

Earlier in the same year, through the united efforts of A. R. Hamlin, Dan Cahill and John Fraters, a 65-pound sturgeon was caught from the bridge.

"While Dan was hitting the fish on the head with a hammer to kill him," the story related, "the tail flopped and knocked the hammer against Dan's eye, making it turn black."

Perch and salmon trout were regularly caught off the bridge during the same year.

The Encinal took a dim view of the fact that Italian fishermen were netting sturgeon and shad in the vicinity of the bridge and a word to the game wardens halted the activity.

The Argus related a droll story in February, 1891, about a mysterious man - very probably an evil wag - who boarded the Alameda-bound South Pacific Coast train at the California Powder works in the Santa Cruz mountains with a heavy valise.

He gave explicit and detailed orders to the baggagemen to handle it very carefully. Then he retired to a coach at the rear of the train. Rumors began to circulate feverishly.

"At the Alameda mole," the Argus reported, "he watched the transfer of his valise from the Santa Cruz train to the local train and told passengers it contained nitroglycerine.

"It is believed the man was a wicked joker but people kept a respectable distance nevertheless."

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Instalment Forty-Five, page 3, San Leandro Bay

Not far from the shores of San Leandro Bay, a bitter pulpit row broke out between that celebrated whiplash, the Rev. Freeman D. Bovard of Alameda's Park Street Methodist-Episcopal Church and the Rev. Henry V. Morgan, pastor of the Christian Church, over the merits and demerits of fashionable private social clubs.

Parson Bovard was agin 'em and while the Argus usually relegated religious news to the inside pages, the January 6, 1896, issue devoted a generous portion of page one to his spread-eagle fulminations in which he referred to the clubs as "man traps."

(Next: The Rev. Mr. Bovard says members of the private social clubs in Alameda, peopled, presumably, by pillars of the community, "carouse around in general" and the clubs are "dens of vice." The Argus points out that there is only one private social club in town and the divine must be aiming his pulpit fire power at El Nido)



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Instalment Forty-Six - San Leandro Bay

Continuing with his frontal assault on Alameda's private social clubs, the Rev. Freeman D. Bovard declared, in his best fire and brimstone style:

"These are the clubrooms which can only be called dens of vice, cunningly-devised 'man traps' ... The members of these unholy clubs drink and gamble ... They carouse around in general drunken hilarity ...

"These gilded dens of infamy, dominated by jockies and dandies, are insensitive to the true graces and refinements of human nature ..

"They reach a class of young men who dare not go into saloons ...

By this time, the outraged Park Street divine was really in spiritual overdrive and he continued:

"They are not only tainted with the fumes of whiskey, brandy, wine and tobacco but are loaded with profanity.

"It is just the blend of moral miasma in which frogs, lizards and snakes thrive but in which all that is noble and exalted in man must die. (It was obvious that the good pastor had delved deeply into a hitherto unexplored field dealing with the morals of frogs, lizards and snakes.)

"Men enter the clubrooms, gay, courteous and clever and tarry long at the cup of dissipation.

more--

Instalment Forty-Six, page 2, San Leandro Bay

"From these clubrooms, men have been seen staggering to their homes in the small hours of the morning in a state of insensible beastliness.

"Let the finger of public indignation, the frown of an outraged community," the wrathful cleric shouted, with appropriate gestures, "be directed to these haunts of dissipation and sin until they are cleansed and fumigated.

"They mask behind programmes of poetry and song.

"They may offer their gloved hands to decent members of society. But they are white with the leprosy of gambling."

Young men who frequent the clubs, he continued, exhibit "the lines and blotches of dissipation ... the shambling, unsteady gait, the hang-dog look, the dead veins lying scattered over the face; the red, rusty eyes ...

"These schools of vice are carried on in the clubrooms of this city ...

"Let these death traps be uncovered; let the poisonous skewers hidden in the pathway of young life, be made known ..."

The vigilant editors of the Argus were quick to point out that while the Rev. Mr. Bovard had attacked "clubs" in the plural, there was only one organization that even vaguely fit the parson's vituperative description and that was the El Nido (the nest) which met at the Masonic Temple and had been founded two years before.

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Instalment Forty-Six, page 3, San Leandro Bay

Anxious to keep the affair going at a hellish pace, the editors turned to the officers of the El Nido for comment. It was not slow in coming.

Under a head which read "They are not worried. The members of the El Nido Club are not losing any sleep. Do not seem to care whether Rev. Bovard's remarks were intended for them or not," the officers declared:

"If the reverend gentleman had El Nido Club in mind when he delivered those erroneous statements, we do not allow gambling of any nature."

The club officers who, by indirection at least, were being assailed by the flamboyant preacher included: C. E. Elliott, president; J. G. Crooks, vice president; A. C. Whyte, secretary; and Henry Sevensing, treasurer. Sevensing was a very proper banker.

(Next: Alameda's saloon proprietors think the Rev. Mr. Bovard is on the right track since private social clubs maintain "side boards" - a euphemism for bars. El Nido strikes back with the Rev. Henry V. Morgan on their side. The ill-fated Bachelors' Club)



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Instalment Forty-Seven - San Leandro Bay

The editors of the Argus who knew a good circulation builder when they saw it, were unwilling to let the Rev. Freeman D. Bovard's incandescent utterances against drinking in private social clubs die away. They decided to work up a symposium setting forth the views of the town's leading saloon proprietors.

The bar towel and bung-starter fraternity were eager to be interviewed.

"The remarks of the Rev. Bovard" the Argus wrote "meet with the approval of several saloon keepers who regard clubs having 'side boards' (euphemism for bars) as an interference with their business.

"'Mr. Bovard hit the nail on the head'" one obviously delighted grogshop owner declared succinctly.

Now it was the last of the ninth and El Nido Club members were at bat.

Either of his own volition or, perhaps, through a bit of judicious persuasion, the Rev. Mr. Morgan, who conceded he had once been a member of a private social club, agreed to deliver a sermon on the matter. El Nido members devoutly hoped the Lord was on their side too.

Pastor Morgan chose as the topic, "What Churches Might Learn from the Clubs" and the Argus headed the story, "Social Clubs are Not the Embodiment of All the Evils of the Day."

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By coincidence, the congregation of the Christian Church met in the Masonic Temple also so that it was not too surprising when 16 members of the El Nido club, whose rooms were just up the hall, drifted in to hear what the parson had to say.

"My experience in life so far," declared the Rev. Mr. Morgan, whose pulpit style was somewhat less waspish than that of his fellow man-of-the-cloth, "has been that the worst place imaginable in which to rear a boy is a community where there are no 'man traps' or pitfalls and where churches control the politics of the town.

"Withal, it would seem if a young man is a Christian and has principle, he is as safe in Alameda as he would be on a farm.

"Social reformers are those who open their mouths rather than their Bibles and cry aloud, regardless of sense or reason ...

"Such men are sure to bring contempt on the ministry."

No further words on the subject of private social clubs were heard from the pulpit of the Park Street Methodist-Episcopal Church.

By coincidence, another club was launched in Alameda about the time the Rev. Mr. Bovard was preoccupied with the subject.

It was the short-lived Bachelors' Club, a story about which appeared in the Argus on January 24, 1896.

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The organizers were A. P. Smiley, president; James A. Munro, secretary; and Oscar Rogers treasurer and while, by virtue of its very name, it seemed likely to be a debonair, carefree outfit, its temporary quarters were in the rear of Smiley's Undertaking Parlors, a cheerless locale.

Evidently, the members sensed immediately that somehow, something was lacking in the matter of clubrooms and a committee was appointed to find new quarters.

Members of the committee - every one a card-carrying bachelor - included Henry von Kapff, Hugh Gallagher, Louis Schoenau and A. F. St. Sure. The last named ultimately became a Federal District Judge in San Francisco.

William Sampson, William Zingg and Thomas Stoddard, none of whom had marched to the altar, were assigned to draft a constitution and by-laws.

The announcement of the formation of the club appeared January 24.

There was a curt story hailing its dissolution four days later. The explanation: the members, in utter rout, were unwilling or unable to face the withering glances they received from Alameda's girls.

(Next: Miss Forderer recites "Rispah Mourning for her Sons," not "A Black Eye for Lager Beer." No brass bands in Alameda. Save your William S. Kimball and Company's cigaret packages and win \$1000)



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Instalment Forty-Eight - San Leandro Bay

While the formation of the short-lived Bachelors' Club was an obvious mistake and disaster, members could take heart from the fact that the Argus editors made mistakes too - at least they claimed it was a mistake.

On August 29, 1893, the paper published an abject apology explaining that through some regrettable lapse, they had reported that Miss Carrie Forderer had won the gold medal for reciting "A Black Eye for Lager Beer" when, as a matter of fact, the guerdon had gone to her for declaiming "Rispa Mourning for her Sons."

The editors absolved themselves and said there was an error in the program that they received.

Presumably, Miss Forderer was of a tender age and by no stretch of the imagination interested in such advertising messages but an advertisement for George W. Chesley's Rock Candy and Rye Whiskey proclaimed:

"It is not only excellent for coughs, colds and pulmonary diseases but is also a delicious beverage.

"A small wine glass full should be taken by all public speakers and singers before attempting to speak or sing."

While the Argus editors occasionally made mistakes, they could be forthright when the occasion called for it. When a man wrote "wanting to know what the opening is in Alameda to start a brass band," the editor responded testily:

"You are respectfully informed that

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men who come here to start brass bands are invariably thrown into vats of boiling lead by the infuriated populace."

In the days when cigarettes sold in five, 10, 15 and 20-cent packs, an ad appeared in the May 5, 1888, Argus which read:

"How to Make Money - \$22,500 in Cash for Cigarette Smokers who use William S. Kimball and Company's Satin, Regal, Athletic and Four-in-Hand Straight Cut; Fragrant Vanity Fair, Superlative, Little Jockey and Velvet Brands.

"Save your empty boxes and wrappers ... The greatest number secures first prize of \$1000 in cash."

While "cigareets" didn't have a very good name at that time among the majority of the public and were referred to in pejorative terms as gaspers, coffin nails and pills, it is interesting to note that William S. Kimball and Company sought a macho image with such names as Athletic, Four-in-Hand and Little Jockey.

The advertisements must have touched off the greatest puff-and-wheeze sweepstakes in years.

Hucksterism was already beginning to take faltering steps toward full-fledged business status in 1869 and although the advertising of Mrs. M. E. Beman, Clairvoyant Physician, was on the side of restrained understatement, the "copy" was, nevertheless, fascinating. It read:

"No visible medicine given. The deaf hear, the blind see and the palsied walk ..." Her offices were in Brooklyn, just a short buggy ride from San Leandro Bay.

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In the same year, "Pratt's Abolition Oil" had budgeted large sums for advertising and one of its teasers read:

"The peoples' never-failing remedy for rheumatism, neuralgia, paralysis, lame back, gout, sprains, bruises, sore throat, diphtheria, colic cramps, diaorrhea, headache, toothache, earache and all internal and external aches and pains."

The price was right too: 50 cent and \$1 bottles.

(Next: Dog power in Alameda saves energy. "Prince" and Towser" pad along on treadmills which, in turn, run sausage machines and pumps. Highlight of 1872: the May 1 Grand Masonic May Day picnic)



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Instalment Forty-Nine - San Leandro Bay

The year 1977 is one in which everyone is preoccupied with energy saving. Perhaps they should turn the clock back to 1871 when dog-power reigned on the shores of San Leandro Bay.

For instance, Conrad Liese, who was selling Porterhouse steak for 20 cents a pound; tenderloin and sirloin for 18 cents; and "first class prime rib roast" for 20 cents, in his Alameda Meat Market, confided to the Encinal editors that power was no problem with him.

"Liese has three large black dogs," the Encinal explained. "They work a tread mill which operates a patent sausage maker. They also draw water by operating a tread mill and pump it to a tank atop the building."

Apparently, none of Liese's customers harbored any fears that one of the black dogs might somehow be drawn, yelping, into the internal economy of the "patent sausage maker."

Probably due to his fertile inventiveness and industry, Liese went on to become a wealthy banker.

A retired blacksmith, Mr. Johnson, formerly of the firm of Johnson and Hally, was equally inventive.

When the Encinal reporter dropped by, "Johnson called a large white Newfoundland and pointed to a heavy chain treadmill.

"The dog mounted to position at once and worked away with great industry and seeming relish."

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Instalment Forty-Nine, page 2, San Leandro Bay

He was pumping water out of a well.

The matter of inventiveness was touched on by the Argus in February, 1880, when it reported that the inimitable Dr. Babcock, who claimed to have invented the fire extinguisher of the same name, was missing and believed dead.

To refresh their readers' memories on such a consequential matter, the Argus explained:

"Many of our readers will remember Dr. Babcock who, some two years ago, was put out of the lockup because he was too dirty."

Everyone with the possible exception of the jailer, was relieved to learn a few days later that the deceitful doctor was alive, malodorous and well.

There was plenty of civic pride and entertainment in Alameda, on the shores of San Leandro Bay, and one of the highlights of 1872 was the May 1 "Grand Masonic May Day Picnic" at Fassking's Gardens. The Encinal wrote it was "the most magnificent May Day Festival that has ever been held on the Pacific Coast."

It would have required more than the traditional three rings to accommodate all the entertainment features such as the escort by McClure's Military Cadets from Oakland; "Robin Hood with a page and butler and 10 others of the band carrying bows and arrows;" Friar Tuck and Muck, the miller's sons; the raising of the May Pole; the May Pole Dance by 30 bridemaids and Foresters (with bugle horns); the song and crowning of May Queen; the "Harvest Home Dance by 100 Maidens and Youths; and the Hay Makers Run by 75 Misses and the McClure's Military Cadets."

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Robin Hood was played by J. D. Brower, Jr.; the May Queen by Priscilla V. Gabbs; Bridesmaids, Mattie C. Ward and Mary J. Cannon; and Friar Tuck, Lyttleton Price.

Ex-Governor H. H. Haight was the orator and Charles Alpers' Metropolitan Band entertained.

The affair was held under the auspices of Oak Grove Masonic Lodge No. 215 and an estimated 6,000 attended.

(Next: The piece de resistance of 1888 is the St. Joseph's Parish Fair in Alameda. You can take your pick from the ice cream table, soda fountain or Wheel of Fortune and Shooting Gallery. The Oakland Municipal Airport on the shores of San Leandro Bay grabs the headlines in 1927)



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Instalment Fifty - San Leandro Bay

If not outshining the Grand Masonic May Day Picnic or attaining par, the St. Joseph Parish Fair in October, 1888, was nevertheless a consequential affair that few dared to ignore.

It was held for one week at St. Joseph's Hall at the Chestnut Street Station.

There were to be three "fancy tables." Table 1 would be presided over "by many ladies of the parish." Table 2 would be in charge of the Children of Mary, Mrs. Rebecca Rich, president; and Table 3 would be supervised by Mrs. B. Lefevre and friends.

There were other typical parish fair attractions of the long-ago and long-since. The Ice Cream Table, redolent of fresh peaches and strawberries, was in the able hands of Mrs. Cashman and the Misses Selliere, Romer and Cashman.

The Refreshment Table, heavily laden with home-made cookies and candies, was under the management of the Catholic Ladies Aid Society, presided over by Mrs. J. M. Robertson.

The Soda Fountain was ably served by three feminine "soda jerks" - Miss Goggin and the Misses Lynch. Had they mastered the esoteric art of tossing the ambrosial liquid from one glass to another in a deft over-the-head motion?

The Grab Bag - an old Parish Fair standby - was in charge of Mrs. McCullie. What treasures did it hold?

And the Wheel of Fortune and Shooting Gallery, masculine ventures, were in the capable hands of the Young Men's

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Institute.

Oakland's fledgling municipal airport on Bay Farm Island and only an outfielder's throw away from that briny back-water, San Leandro Bay, was propelled into the big time June 28, 1927, when Army Lieuts. Lester J. Maitland, 29, and Albert F. Hegenberger, 31, flew the tri-motored "Bird of Paradise" to the Hawaiian Islands in 25 hours and 49 minutes.

It was the first trans-Pacific flight.

In the wake of the trans-Atlantic flight of Charles A. Lindbergh, the "lone eagle," and imitative ventures, transoceanic flying was assuming high priority although the planes available for the challenge were pitifully inadequate.

Next to span the 2408 miles of the Pacific and become the first civilians to accomplish the feat were Ernest L. ("Ernie") Smith and his navigator, Emory Bronte, 25.

They took off on July 14, 1927 from the newly-graded 7000-foot Oakland Municipal Airport strip in the "City of Oakland" and landed in somewhat ad lib fashion in the top of a kiawe tree on the Island of Molokai. Their time, since they did not reach Wheeler Field, was 25 hours and 37 minutes. Some 10,000 watched the take off.

Metaphorically, Dante's words in the Divine Comedy might have applied to the next aviation adventure at the Oakland Airport - the one many referred to cynically as the screw-loose sweepstakes. Dante wrote:

"O, human race, born to fly upward,  
wherefore at a little wind dost thou  
so fall?"

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The Dole Flights for \$25,000 in first money and \$10,000 to the plane coming in second, had as entrants, many pilots who had never flown extensively over water, some who knew only the rudiments of navigation and an aggregation of land planes, none of which had been designed for a trip of more than 300 or 400 miles. Only one ship carried two-way radio.

Hence the contenders - there were 15 entrants to start but the figure dwindled down to four by the time engine troubles and lingering farewell glances at the Golden Gate dissuaded some - piled in extra gasoline tanks until they interfered with the pilot's vision. Even five-gallon cans were tucked in here and there despite the fire hazard. This meant that the tiny planes were overloaded for takeoff and several never lifted from the runway.

(Next: The melodramatic, "crazy, once in a lifetime" Dole Flights from the Oakland Municipal Airport to the Hawaiian Islands in August, 1927, for fame and fortune. Seven plunge into the Pacific. Some 50,000 watch the takeoffs on August 16.)



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Instalment Fifty-One - San Leandro Bay

Several days before the actual take-off in the Dole Flight competition, the pilots assembled in one of the nondescript buildings that rimmed the Oakland airport to draw numbered slips out of a wastebasket that would determine the order for departure. The only thing uniform about this group of maverick flyers was, perhaps, their costume -- golf knickers, sweaters, suede jackets, coveralls and the inevitable helmet and goggles.

It was a chancy, gambling business with high stakes in 1927 for the winners. Alameda's Lesley Forden underlines this facet of the undertaking in his comprehensive book entitled "Glory Gamblers" (Ballantine Books, 1961)

Before it was all over, five members of the crews of two planes including Mildred Doran, 22, the Caro, Mich., sixth grade and Sunday school teacher, were dead. And a quixotic deed added to the death toll when two airmen in a small plane, took off on a hopeless rescue mission despite the fact that a vast Navy fleet was deployed all over the search area.

Hawaiian Pineapple King James D. Dole was the man who underwrote the cost of the affair and he did it to encourage American trans-ocean flights and to hurry the day when the tropical islands would be "only a few hours away."

Originally, he had set the day for take-off as August 12, 1927, to coincide with the full moon phase and the date Hawaii had become a territory.

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Instalment Fifty-One, page 2, San Leandro Bay

But conditions were so chaotic at the Oakland Airport where navigators were still being recruited for ships and harried federal authorities were conducting safety checks, that a reprieve until August 16 was granted.

Takeoff for the first of the single-engined planes was to be at noon August 16 and the following entrants were to climb into the sky at one-minute intervals. The first plane to touch Wheeler Field in the islands was to be the winner, regardless of when the pilot took off. There was no "weighting" system.

Long before noon, Tuesday, August 16, a vast assemblage of people - many of them youngsters playing "hookey" from school - began gathering near the airport and on the shores of San Leandro Bay. They had camp stools, picnic lunches and the reigning favorite - the ubiquitous ukulele - at hand, and candy butchers roamed the dusty area. Oakland Airport was only one step removed from a plowed field.

The event was a lodestone for the media. Radio, still in its infancy, was providing on-the-spot coverage. All the wire services - AP, UP, Hearst's INS, PCNS and Universal Service - the local newspapers and newsreel cameramen were on hand to report the adventure and its misadventures to the world.

Oakland was on the map.

Police estimates that August day in 1927 set the size of the crowd at 50,000.

It was, as someone put it, a "crazy, once in a lifetime stunt" and Forden added that it was undiluted melodrama "a wild gamble by a cast of romantic characters."

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Now the noon starting time was approaching and cries of "contact!", the spinning by hand of propellers, the staccato roar of the engines as they sprang to life and ground crews trundling the fragile little planes out on the field, took place.

(Next: Art Goebel wins the \$25,000 Dole first prize by arriving first in the Hawaiian Islands in the elapsed time of 26 hours, 17 minutes and 33 seconds. A fleet of three 30-knot speedboats race across San Leandro Bay carrying airmail and passengers from the Oakland Airport to San Francisco)



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Instalment Fifty-Two - San Leandro Bay

The checkered flag was poised on the starting line at the Oakland Airport that August 16, 1927, and at precisely noon, Ed Howard's arm described a downward arc.

The Dole Flights were officially under way.

At 12:02 p.m. Bennett Griffin's "Oklahoma" was airborne. But he and his navigator, A. L. Henley were soon back on the ground. Engine trouble.

In rapid succession, the others took to the air or ground-looped.

These were the four tiny planes which were briefly silhouetted against the Golden Gate headlands as they droned toward coveted Hawaiian laurels and a small fortune:

WOOLAROC - Art Goebel, pilot and William V. Davis, Jr., navigator.

ALOHA - Martin Jensen, pilot and Paul Schluter, navigator.

MISS DORAN - John Augy Pedlar, 24, irrepressible "strawhat aviator" and former wing-walker, pilot; Vilas R. ("Cy") Knope, navigator; and Mildred Doran, passenger. The "Miss Doran" was the only bi-plane among the entrants; all the others were monoplanes.

GOLDEN EAGLE - John W. ("Jack") Frost, pilot; Gordon Scott, 26, navigator.

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Instalment Fifty-Two, page 2, San Leandro Bay

The winners? Goebel and his partner claimed the \$25,000 first prize money for negotiating the 2408 over-water miles in 26 hours, 17 minutes and 33 seconds. Jensen and Schluter qualified for the second money of \$10,000.

The "Woolaroc" averaged slightly better than 92 miles an hour for the distance.

As the hours passed and gasoline consumption figures made it evident that the "Miss Doran" and the "Golden Eagle" had plunged into the Pacific, a massive Navy search and rescue effort began.

But despite this, Capt. William P. ("Bill") Erwin, 31, and his navigator, Alvin ("Ike") Eichwaldt, Dole Flight entrants in the "Dallas Spirit" who had encountered hard luck, determined to return to the air in a desperate effort to find the lost planes.

They took off on this rash, forlorn hope and the last heard from them was an SOS in mid-Pacific. Then, silence.

While the Oakland Airport had received acres of glowing reclame from the print media as the result of the Dole flights and radio was not far behind, the lofty pinnacle was reached when the field was dedicated by Lindbergh on September 17, 1927. The "lone eagle" flew here in the equally-famous "Spirit of St. Louis."

More consequential from a commercial standpoint and presaging more solvent days to come, was the arrival of the transcontinental airmail in December, 1927.

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This led ultimately -- taking up the matter out of sequence -- to the establishment of a speedboat express service from the newly-dredged Airport Channel on San Leandro Bay to the San Francisco Ferry Building.

So now, in place of the placid ripples left behind by sailing scows, San Leandro Bay was criss-crossed by the churning wakes of twin-screw speed boats and in the offing were multiple takeoffs and landings by seaplanes.

It was estimated, the 30-knot speedboats, with engines turning up 400 horsepower halved the transit time for the airmail over the traditional truck and ferry boat routing. Some called the craft "water sleds."

Moreover, competition was cutthroat with Mills Field - now the San Francisco Municipal Airport - and figures were produced to show that the speedboat innovation would better the fastest local transportation of air mail Mills could offer by a half hour.

(Next: Seven speedboat trips a day from the Oakland Municipal Airport across San Leandro Bay to San Francisco. Can all the estuary bridges be opened simultaneously to accommodate the speedboats?)



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Instalment Fifty-Three - San Leandro Bay

Service across San Leandro Bay with the 30-knot speedboats from the Oakland Airport to San Francisco began at 11:30 a.m. January 15, 1930. The 45-foot "Redwood" of the Western Water Taxi Company left Pier 5 at the north wing of the Ferry Building for the Airport Channel.

Other boats in the fleet operated by L. F. Fahy and N. S. McNulty of San Francisco included the "Baywood" and the "Oakwood." Each boat had a skipper and engineer.

The craft could accommodate 25 passengers and single fares were \$1.25 or \$2 a round trip on Sundays and holidays - a nice bay excursion - or \$1.50 and \$2.25 on weekdays. For 50 cents you could ride to the foot of Broadway. Express was a thumping 50 cents a pound.

After a few initial "shakedown" trips, Western Water Taxi settled down to a routine of seven trips daily, the first trip leaving the Oakland Airport at 7:58 a.m. The "owl" left at 8 p.m.

In granting Western Water Taxi a certificate of convenience and necessity, the State Public Utilities Commission sagaciously observed:

"The Commission holds .. that the primary purpose of travel by airplane is to save time and that it seems an absurdity to include the present slow service (auto, truck and ferry boat) to and from the airport, with the balance of the journey made at an average speed of probably 100 miles an hour and to characterize it all as fast service."

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Placing their official seal of approval on the service, just prior to its inauguration, were 35 members of the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco who rode in the "Redwood" to the Oakland Airport and had lunch there. William F. Cheney, president, and Edward G. Sheibley, Chairman of the Aviation Section, made the speedy trip to find out just what Oakland was up to.

Even postal officials conceded that the addition of the speedboat service placed the Oakland Airport "second to none in the Bay Area in the matter of time saving."

Early in the game, Western Water Taxi, with the full backing of the Oakland Port Commission, sought to have the three bridges on the estuary, which afforded limited clearances, opened simultaneously to facilitate the passage of the speedboats. This would obviate the necessity of giving a horn signal at each span with a possible wait.

"It is stated," a San Francisco newspaper (Chronicle) reported "that the speedboats will clear all three bridges in less time than the slower craft take to pass through one draw ..."

It soon developed this might be a complicated matter involving, in addition to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, the War Department, the Coast Guard and the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Western Water Taxi peevishly announced that before long it would be operating its fleet up and down the south shore of Alameda "making unnecessary, a halt at three bridges while the spans are lifted."

more--

Instalment Fifty-Three, page 3, San Leandro Bay

Times changed, however, and speedboats were no longer in requisition. Offshore rum-runners snapped them up at auction. The craft were fleet and commodious.

Simultaneously with the inauguration of the speedboat service, the Port of Oakland dredged a seaplane landing on San Leandro Bay.

By 1948, some years after the Airport Channel ceased being used for barge commerce, 21 decommissioned LST's, the work horses of the Navy's amphibious forces, were moored there awaiting the scrapper's torch.

(Next: Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith flies the Pacific from the Oakland Airport to Australia in May-June 1928. He reverses direction in 1934. Amelia Earhart solos from Hawaii to Oakland in January, 1935, and takes off on her ill-fated round-the-world flight on May 20, 1937)



EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
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Phone: 531-9300  
Monte Monteagle

Instalment Fifty-Four - San Leandro Bay

Much happened in 1927 to make the  
Oakland Airport Page 1 news but there was more "star billing" to come.

On May 31, 1928, Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith piloted the "Southern Cross" off the tarmac, bound for Australia, 7320 miles away. It was to be another "first." The crew was composed of C.T.P. Ulm, James Warner and Harry W. Lyons. They touched down at Brisbane on June 8.

Sir Charles was in the headlines again on October 20, 1934, when he reversed directions and flew from "down under" to Oakland, touching down on the by-now-familiar airport on November 4. It was to be yet another "first". Capt. P. G. Taylor accompanied him.

Amelia Earhart - the headline writers were calling her "Lady Lindy" - soloed from Hawaii to the Oakland Airport taking off January 11, 1935, and landing January 12. Her time was 18 hours, 16 minutes, and she was the first woman to fly the Pacific, a feat the unfortunate Mildred Doran did not live to achieve.

The name of Amelia Earhart was on everyone's lips again on May 20, 1937, when she and her navigator, Fred Noonan, took off from Oakland on her ill-fated round-the-world flight. The plane vanished July 2, 1937, near Lae, New Guinea and novelists and historians have been writing about it ever since. There have been sinister hints that she was, in fact, carrying out an espionage mission for the U. S. Government and was shot down or captured by the Japanese.

more--

Instalment Fifty-Four, page 2, San Leandro Bay

One of the final chapters dealing with San Leandro Bay encompassed a time period of more than two decades and was preoccupied with a whole litany of long-range growth schemes. Some of the component parts included soaring high-rise structures, a marine terminal with berths for 28 ocean-going vessels, man-made islands, and casual references to a \$60,000,000 development.

Some, perhaps, were grandiose; others seemed practical enough from the standpoint of the Port of Oakland which, ordinarily, was committed to the use of its tax-free lands strictly for industrial and port development.

However, during the period 1967-70, other voices including those of environmentalists, began to be heard. In March, 1967, Oakland City Councilman Paul Brom said San Leandro Bay could be "another Lake Merritt" but warned that the city would have "to move fast to prevent the Port from over-industrializing the area...

"Since very few undeveloped areas remain in the city, we must be sure that the best possible development takes place in those few remaining undeveloped areas ..."

By December, 1970, William Penn Mott, Jr., former East Bay Regional Park District Manager and then Director of the State Department of Parks and Recreation, warned that Oakland's plans for a corporation yard had "encroached too far into the shoreline and water surface of the San Leandro Waterfowl Refuge and is in conflict with the San Francisco Bay Plan." He was backed by the State Fish and Game Department.

(Next: A multiplicity of sweeping development and industrial plans for San Leandro Bay which would completely alter its appearance. The East Bay Regional Park District announces its intention to try to negotiate a long-term lease of the bay for park purposes with the Port of Oakland)

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Monte Monteagle

Instalment Fifty-Five - San Leandro Bay

It was in the midst of renewed planning and talking of vast industrial growth for San Leandro Bay that the East Bay Regional Park District announced it would seek to negotiate a long-term lease of the bay from the Port of Oakland.

The announcement, an eye-opener at the time, projected the creation of a handy, water-oriented urban park.

EBRPD General Manager Richard C. Trudeau had long been concerned about the lack of an urban park in the deprived area and had been laying his plans carefully with backing of the EBRPD Board.

The outcome of the long and detailed negotiations was that EBRPD leased the bay from the Port for 25 years, the first step toward completing an 800-acre water-oriented park. Indicative of the park's assured future popularity, fishermen rim the bay shore almost daily now although virtually none of the amenities have been installed. It is sure to attract many park users.

The first news stories hinting at large-scale industrialization of San Leandro Bay and the surrounding shores appeared in an Oakland newspaper (Tribune) in October, 1947. It mentioned dredging a deep water channel at the Bay Farm Island Bridge and making a start on a \$60,000,000 shipping and commercial development.

The story was accompanied with a detailed map and alluded to "the development of San Leandro Bay into a deep water port of incalculable value."

more--



Instalment Fifty-Five, page 2, San Leandro Bay

In the same year, another story appeared in opposition to the proposed Southern Crossing of the San Francisco Bay and referred to the fact it would be a "threat to the huge marine terminal and industrial project" planned for San Leandro Bay. "Ocean liners," the story added, referring to the Port's plans, "would be brought to within a few miles of the fast-developing industrial section in the San Leandro-Hayward area."

A year later, the same paper (Tribune) wrote that the Port of Oakland would reclaim 950 acres of San Leandro Bay marshlands and develop a shipping terminal with berths for 28 ocean-going vessels.

By 1959, the emphasis had changed somewhat and an Oakland newspaper (Tribune) wrote of dredging the Bay Farm Island channel to 35 feet, a deep water harbor in San Leandro Bay and the development of a "yachtsmen's paradise" in the "best protected small harbor in San Francisco Bay." The pleasure boat areas were to be dredged to 10 feet.

(Next: More new plans for industrial or residential development of San Leandro Bay. Skyscraper and garden apartments, shopping centers and an island restaurant are mentioned. In 1772, such matters obviously don't concern Capt. Pedro Fages and his faithful diarist, Father Juan Crespi, as they arrive at San Leandro Bay after a trek from Monterey)

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Monte Monteagle

Instalment Fifty-Six - San Leandro Bay

Another shift in direction for sweeping development of San Leandro Bay surfaced in February, 1962.

Ambitious preliminary plans were publicized for a 1300-acre residential, shopping center and recreation area on the bay featuring "skyscraper and garden apartments" and a restaurant on a man-made island.

The Port's plans, described in an Oakland newspaper (Tribune) as "imaginative, daring and courageous," called for the area to "be completely reshaped through dredging and filling to provide one large island in the center and a smaller island at the entrance."

The \$3,000,000 residential development, the story went on, provided for house boats, shopping centers, a landing channel for seaplanes and repair hangars.

Arrowhead Marsh - the only remnant of the once sprawling marshes surrounding San Leandro Bay - which EBRPD plans to establish as a bird sanctuary, was tabbed for docks, a restaurant and boatel and yacht clubs. Three roadways would have serviced the new area.

The story spoke of "a spectacular plan to convert San Leandro Bay mudflats into a lakeshore-type residential recreation area."

Three years later, apparently, the plans had not changed substantially, and an Oakland news story (Tribune) reported that the Port was negotiating with a large Boston, Mass., financial

more--

Instalment Fifty-Six, page 2, San Leandro Bay

firm "to develop the Port's San Leandro Bay properties as a high-rise housing and commercial center."

The newspaper also reported in the same story that the Port had begun fill operations on San Leandro Bay tidelands and marshes "in hopes of beating the September 17, 1965, deadline when the McAteer-Petris 'Save the Bay' Act goes into effect."

Steel ships, airplanes and skyscraper apartments were no part of the ponderings of Capt. Pedro Fages and his faithful diarist, Father Juan Crespi, a couple of centuries before when, accompanied by 12 soldiers and a muleteer, they left Monterey to find a land route to San Francisco Bay and establish a mission.

According to Bancroft, the party reached Arroyo de Bosque "on a branch of the bay which, with another similar branch, forms a peninsula bearing a grove of oaks .." on March 26, 1772. This apparently was a description of what later was to become the City of Alameda.

Bancroft and other historians theorize that Captain Fages and his little party were probably near Brickyard Slough on the shores of San Leandro Bay. The slough later was enlarged to become a part of the new estuary.

On the following day, the account continues, the party, which had left Monterey on March 20, had to surmount a series of hills (in later years, Brooklyn and East Oakland) "in order to get around an estuary." The latter, no doubt, was San Antonio Creek and its northerly extension which later became Lake Merritt.

more--

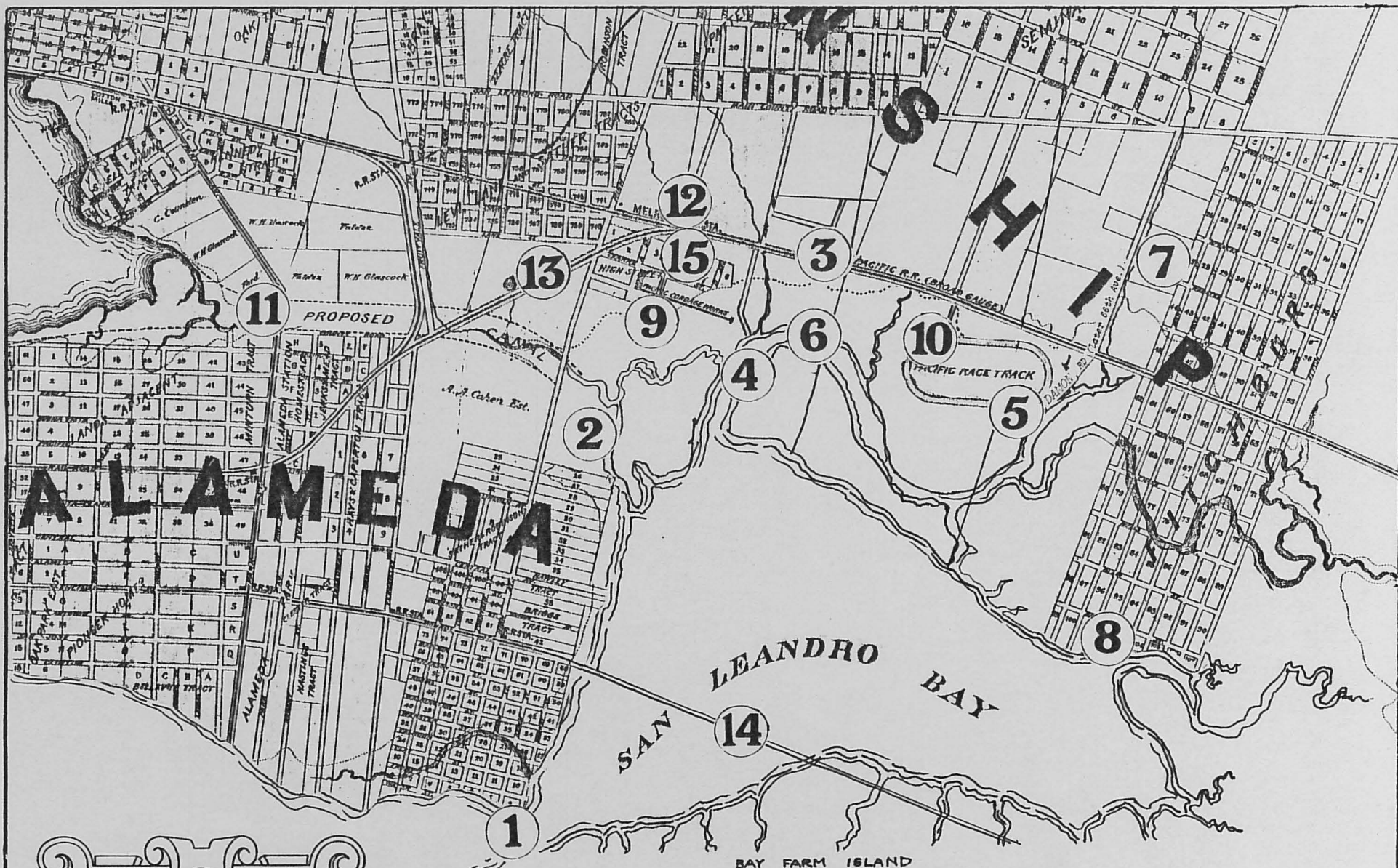


Instalment Fifty-Six, page 3, San Leandro Bay

Now the days of exploring are over and the two-county East Bay Regional Park District is engaged in developing a novel water-dominated park on San Leandro Bay in the heart of a great city.

The amenities will be low-keyed and the goal will be to "keep it natural" as much as possible.

It will be another and important chapter in the region's rich history.



(1) BAY FARM ISLAND BRIDGE; (2) BRICKYARD SLOUGH; (3) CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILROAD; (4) CLARK'S LANDING; (5) DAMON'S LANDING; (6) EAST CREEK SLOUGH; (7) ENSIGN BICKFORD FUSE WORKS; (8) FITCHBURG LANDING; (9) PACIFIC CORDAGE COMPANY; (10) PACIFIC RACETRACK; (11) PROPOSED ROUTING OF ESTUARY; (12) SIMPSON'S SWITCH (LATER MELROSE STATION); (13) TRACK TO ALAMEDA FROM MELROSE; (14) SOUTH PACIFIC COAST RAILROAD TRESTLE; (15) WESTERN FUSE AND EXPLOSIVES COMPANY.







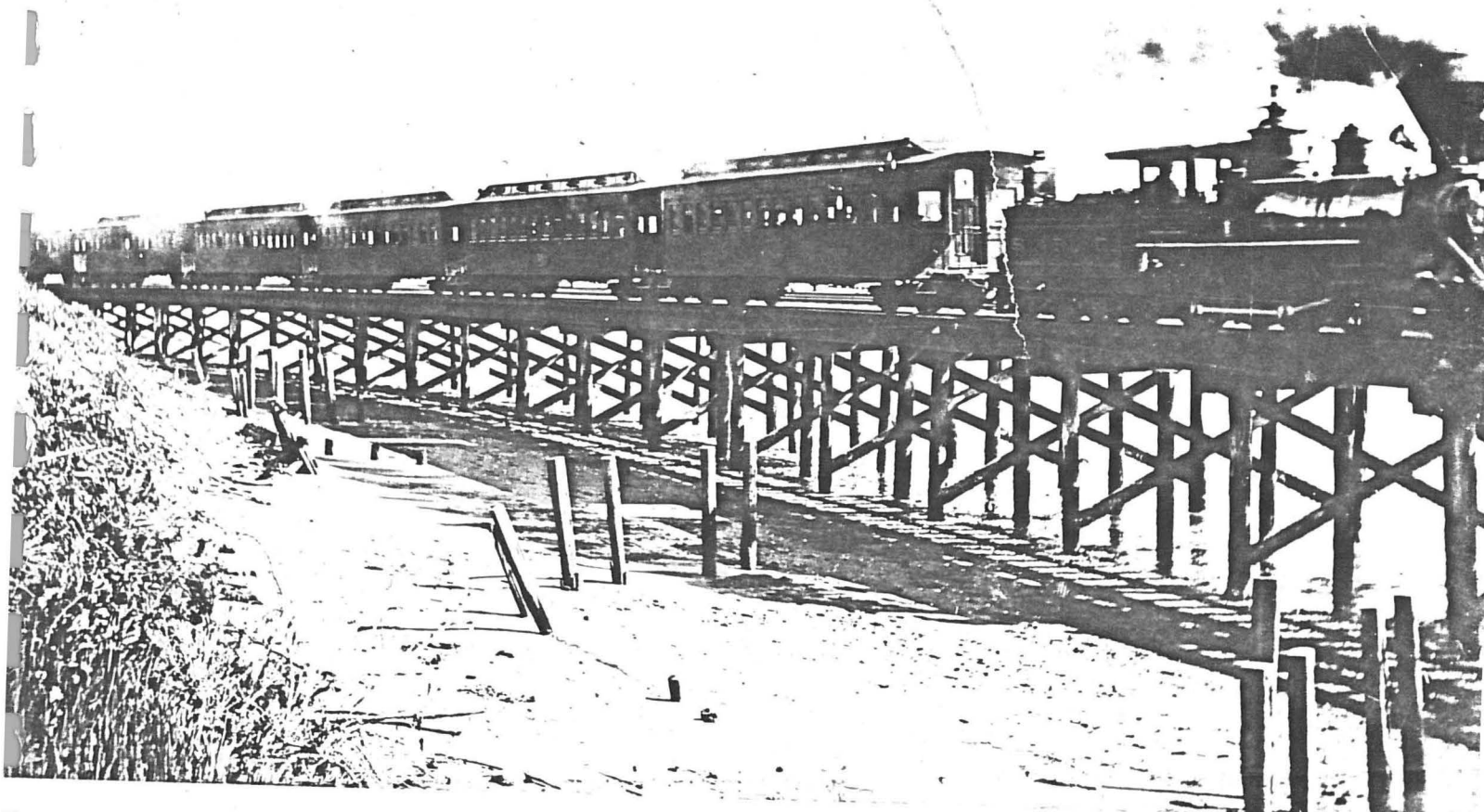
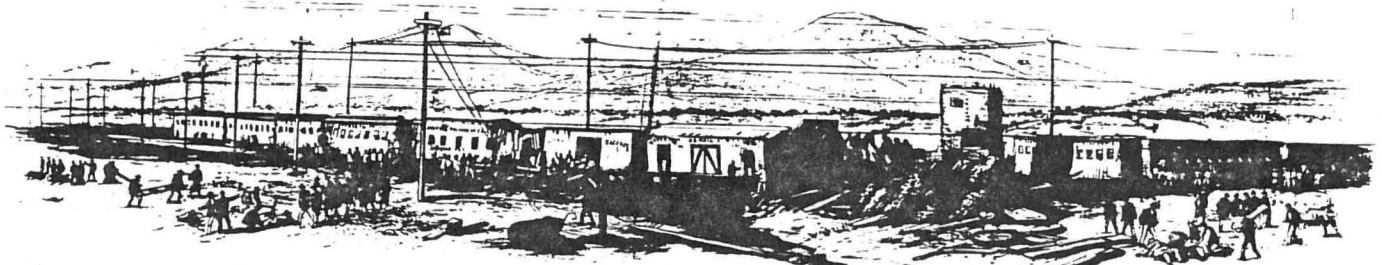


PHOTO CAPTION--HISTORY OF SAN LEANDRO BAY

NARROW GAUGE EXPRESS!--Northbound and only about a minute away from Alameda's High Street station, this South Pacific Coast Railroad express, with bell ringing madly, is a paradigm of narrow gauge railroading in the 1880's. The train has just negotiated the one-mile trestle which crossed San Leandro Bay.--Photo from the Vernon J. Sappers Collection.

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CALIFORNIA--COLLISION OF THE SAN FRANCISCO AND ALAMEDA TRAIN WITH THAT ON THE WESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

PHOTO CAPTION--HISTORY OF SAN LEANDRO BAY

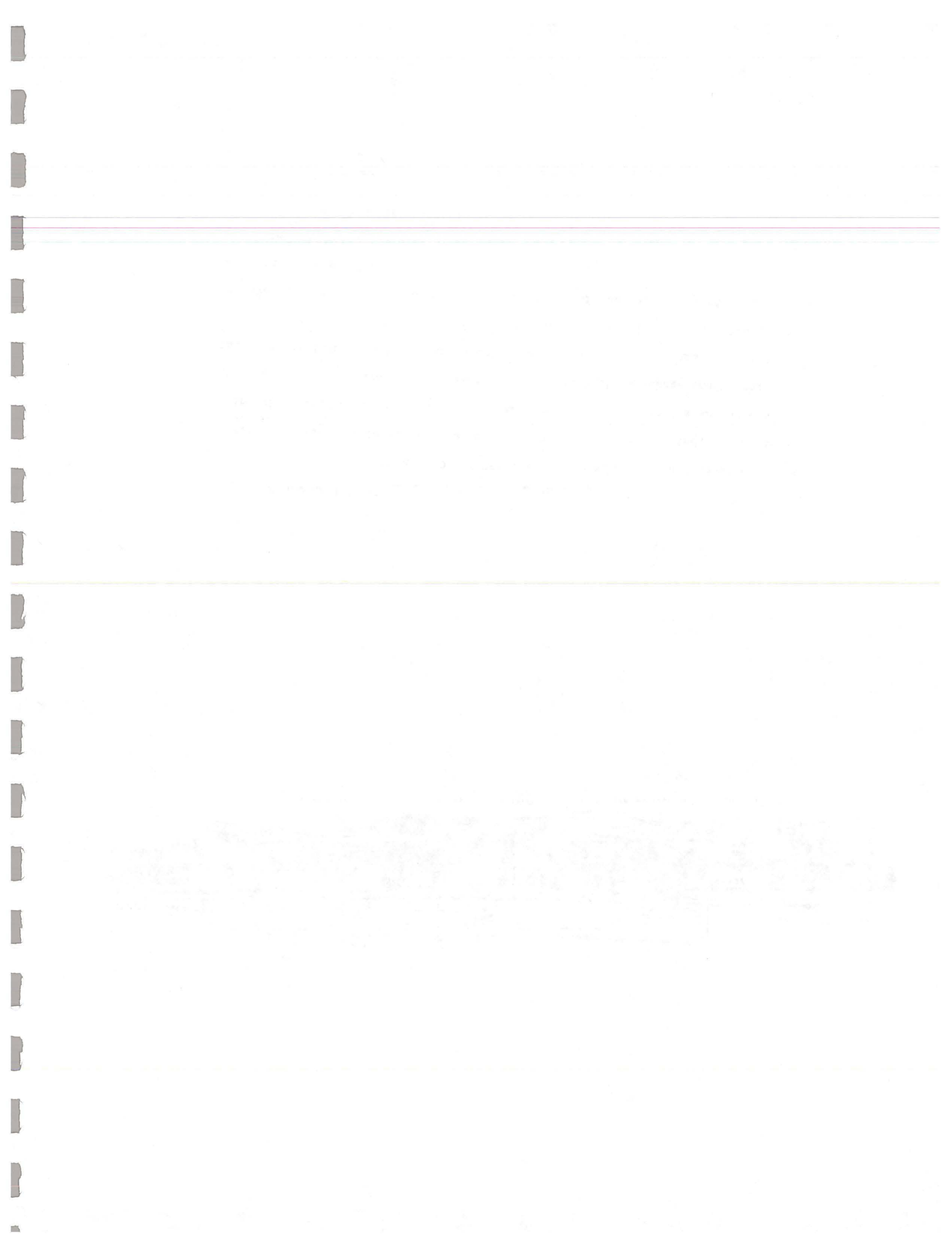
SAN LEANDRO BAY WRECK SCENE--It was the proud boast of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper that no major news event of any kind, susceptible of being sketched, was overlooked. So it was not surprising that its artist was on the scene on the shores of San Leandro Bay to sketch the wreckage and horror after the transcontinental railroad train collided head-on with the Alameda Local at Damon's Station on November 14, 1869. The death toll was 15. Leslie's published the sketch December 11, 1869--Photocopy, courtesy of the University of California's Bancroft Library. #####

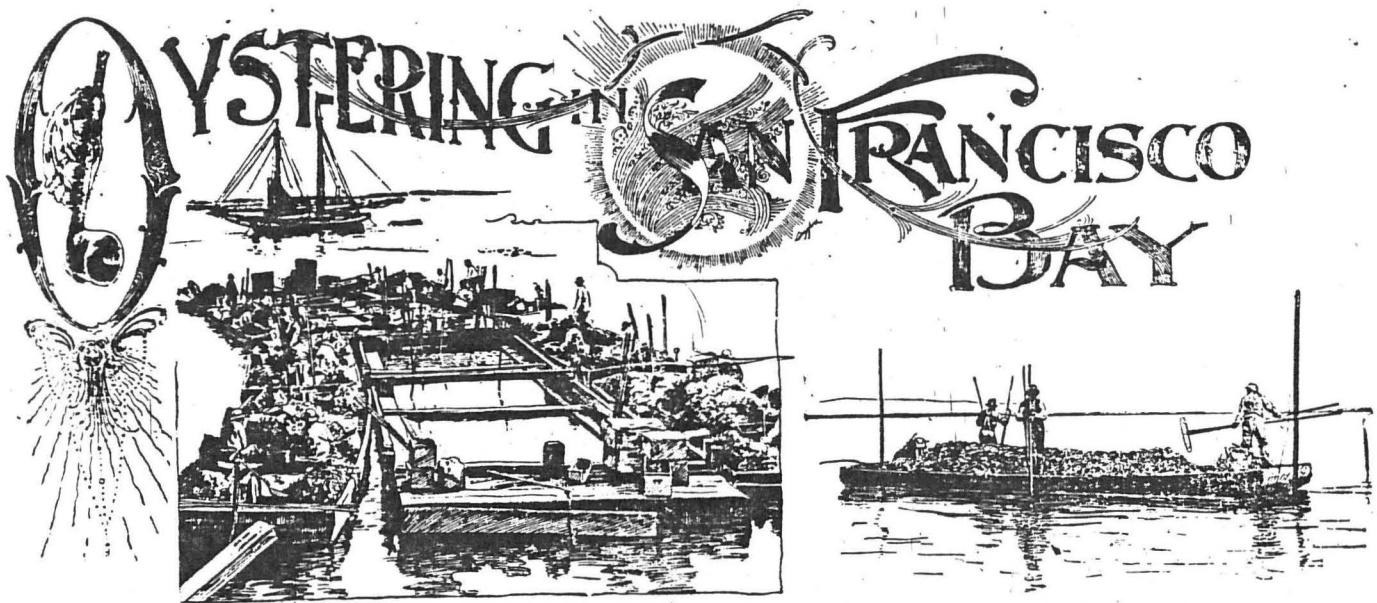
EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
11500 SKYLINE BOULEVARD, OAKLAND 94619  
(Monte Monteagle--531-9300)

13923-11

January, 1978







The OYSTER trade of the United States exceeds that of any other country and the oysters are sold more cheaply than in other parts of the world.

The oyster business of New York was started in 1833 and the New York oyster is today for the most part a transplanted oyster and comes from Long Island sound or from the Connecticut Delaware and Virginia waters.

The oyster is very particular about its home, the water must be neither too cold nor too warm, and the bottom must be hard enough to prevent them from sinking in the mud. The temperature found in which the oyster will live and grow, the stability of the soil, the salinity, etc., have to be determined. The land already in part or wholly under water at high tide is

conveys something akin to affection for the stout little, puffed blanch. An exit from the several miles of labyrinthine channels brings you close to the strikingly characteristic camp, a series of white buildings, surrounded by a windmill and surrounded by a lock, situated on a small island.

The oyster is very particular about its home, the water must be neither too cold nor too warm, and the bottom must be hard enough to prevent them from sinking in the mud. The temperature found in which the oyster will live and grow, the stability of the soil, the salinity, etc., have to be determined. The land already in part or wholly under water at high tide is

in clusters. Being broken apart they are carefully spread in other beds, preferably those which have been rested for a season, the oysters seem to grow and fatten better on land which is not in constant use. At the end of another year the young oyster is again tugged up and moved further down the bay, where after a year's growth it is in prime condition for market.

There is no fatter or finer flavored oyster in the world than our California three-year-old transplanted oyster. The Long Island sound and Chesapeake bay oysters are not a whit better and the New Orleans and Texas article, which sometimes finds its way to our markets, is not to be compared with them at all. At four years of age the transplanted oyster is still in the condition, but instead of the shell increases in thickness and size, while the oyster becomes tough and tasteless. The average life of an oyster is estimated

other, which came in contact with a bit of leather strap, mostly encased the leather with its shell. If it is an old pipe, a piece of machinery or a saw tooth with which it comes in contact, it matters not, the oyster immediately accomplishes these curious feats in quite another story. The modern scientist knows little more about how the oyster makes his shell than did Shakespeare.

"Fool! 'Tis not till how an oyster makes his shell?"

"King Lear—No."

"Fool! Nor I neither."

Should the shell become cracked it is at once cemented by its tenant and made stronger than ever.

The oyster has its impenetrable foe. First among them is the stinkbug, with its curious body and still more curious mouth, with which it crushes oyster shells as a child would a cracker. They are, for the most

large amount of digestive juices which the oyster fluid contains. In fact, if not cracked to death or smothered in grease by its foe, it is almost a self-digesting dead oyster.

EMORY E. SMITH.

**Royalty Danced in Ballet.**

Many of the members of the English royal family are known to take a keen interest in the drama, some of them even delighting to take part in theatrical performances. As far as is known, however, they have never followed in ballet dancing on their own account. It was different, however, in the days of Henry VII. for that loyal monarch of the many wives actually encircled his shoulder, the Princess Mary, in 1501, to be the court as the principal dancer in an entertainment. When the Princess first appeared on the stage, she wore a black cap

#### PHOTO CAPTION--HISTORY OF SAN LEANDRO BAY

OYSTERING VIGNETTE--This 1898 sketch depicts typical scenes in the oyster farming business, many of which were repeated in San Leandro Bay. At one time, the oyster industry was a "million dollar business" in San Francisco Bay. Perhaps if polluted waters are eliminated, "oystering" will return--Photocopy, courtesy of the University of California's Bancroft Library ####

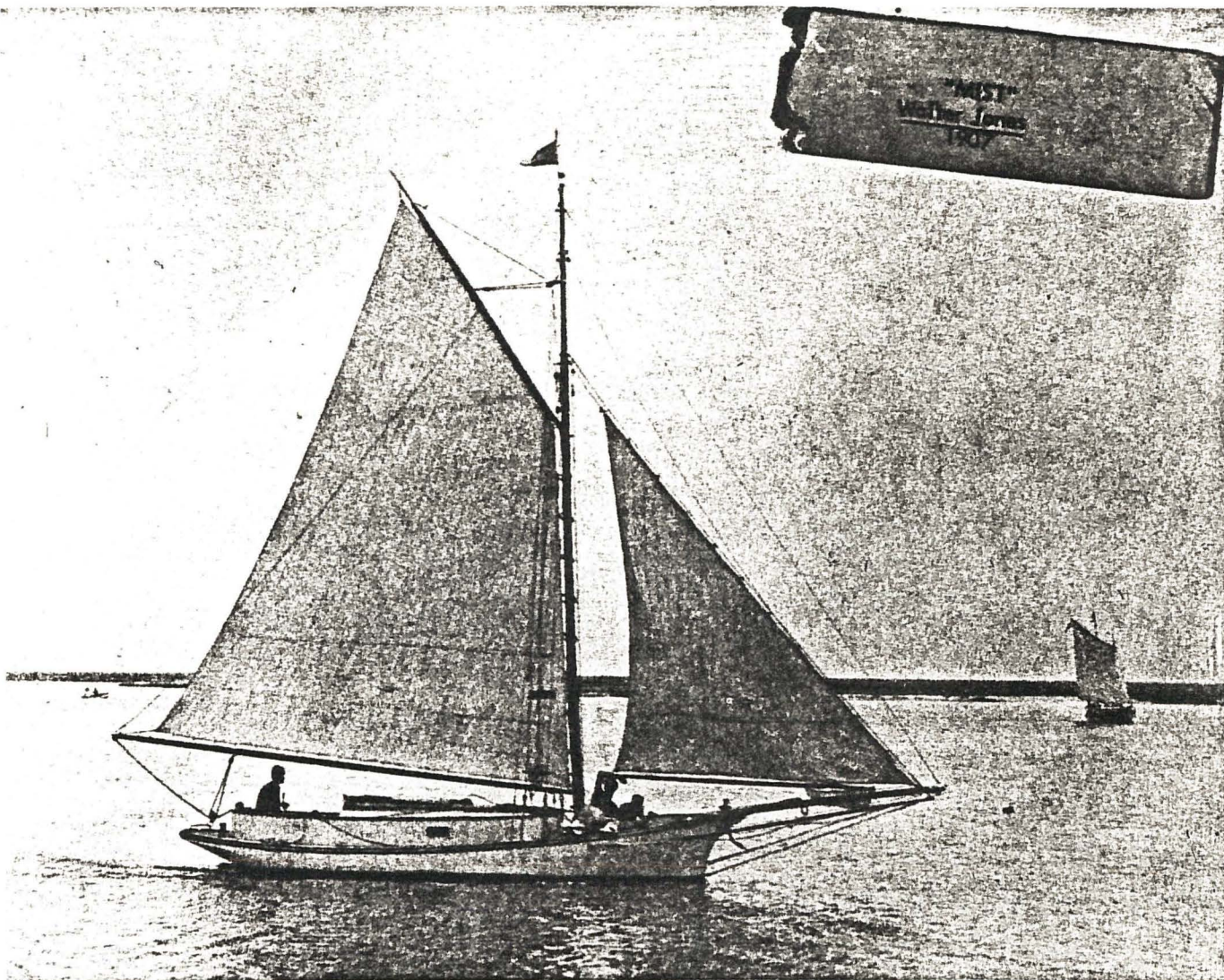
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11500 SKYLINE BOULEVARD, OAKLAND 94619  
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13723-12

January, 1978







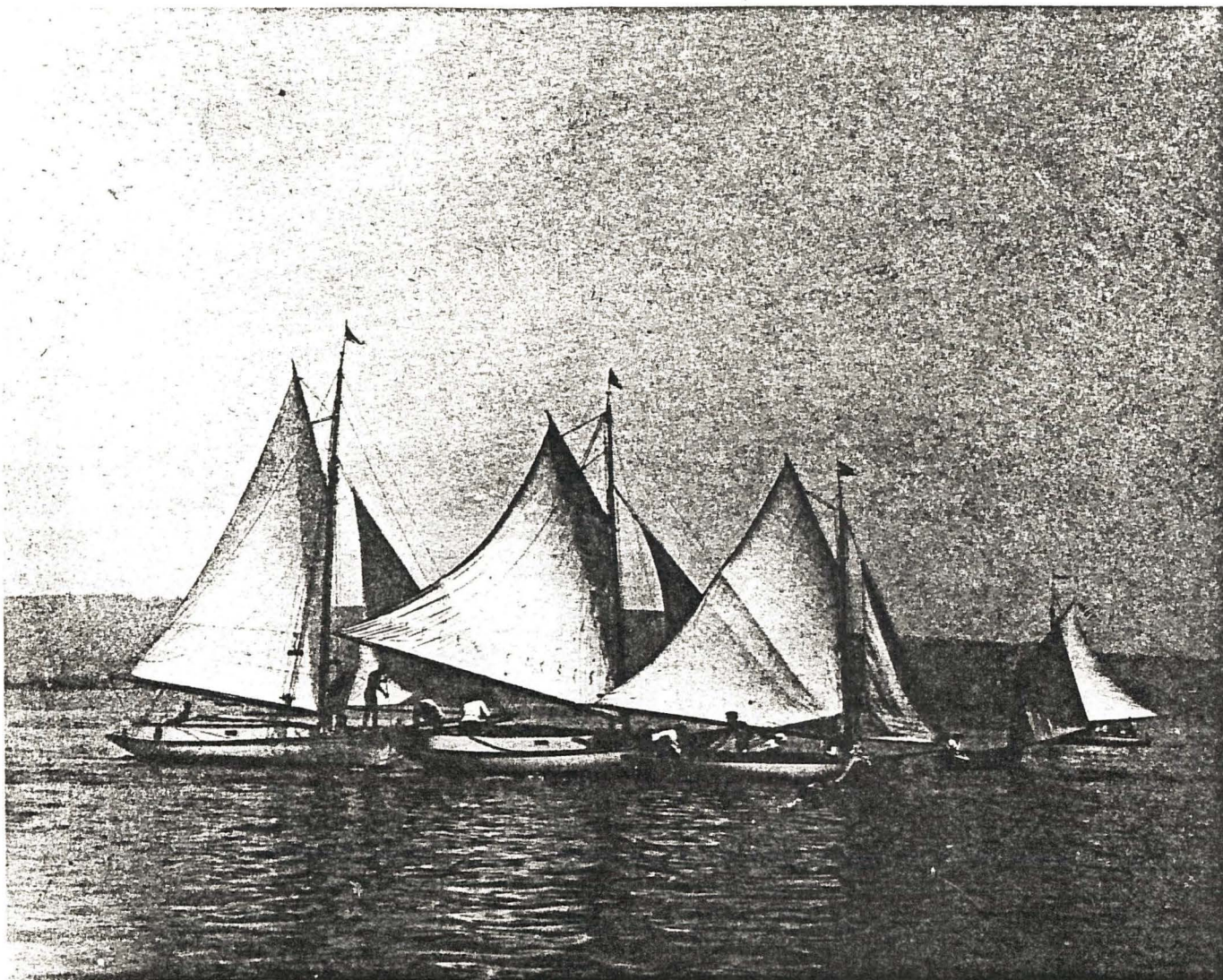
YACHTING PORTRAIT IN '07--Sailing in San Leandro Bay waters  
 in 1907 is Walter Jones' "Mist." Note craft off to right. The "Mist" flew the  
 burgee of the Aeolian Yacht Club which maintains its wharves and clubhouse at the  
 entrance to San Leandro Bay.--Photo, courtesy Aeolian Yacht Club #####

November, 1977

#  
 13723-1



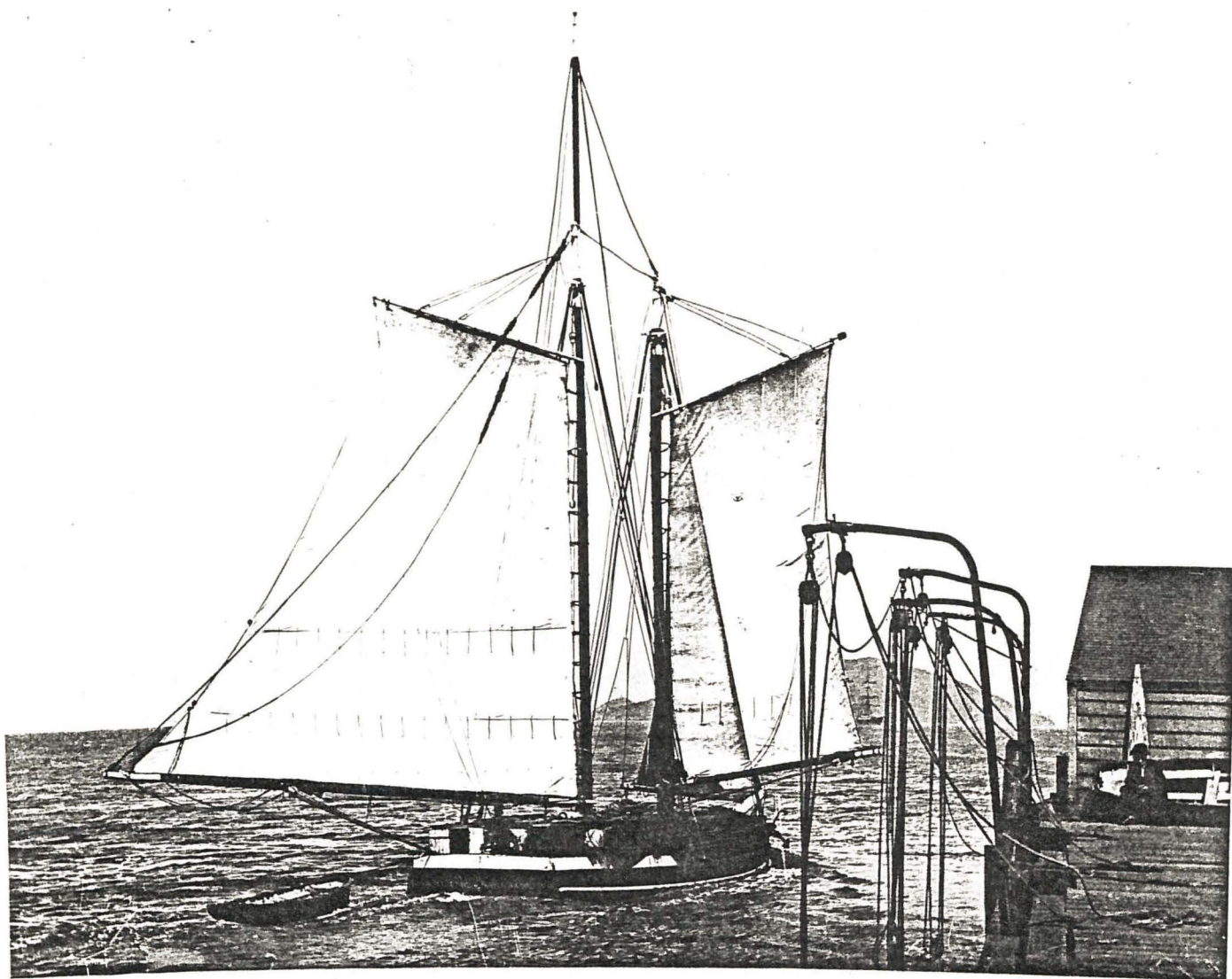




AEOLIAN'S FIRST RACE--Gathering in San Leandro Bay preparatory to the Aeolian Yacht Club's first race are, from left, in the immediate foreground, Dutch Postel's "Mist;" Bruno Roebbe's "Ceres;" and the "Idler" owned and sailed by Knight-Evans. Alameda was a yachting community as early as 1875 and, perhaps, before.--Photo, courtesy Aeolian Yacht Club ##### November, 1977 #13515-2





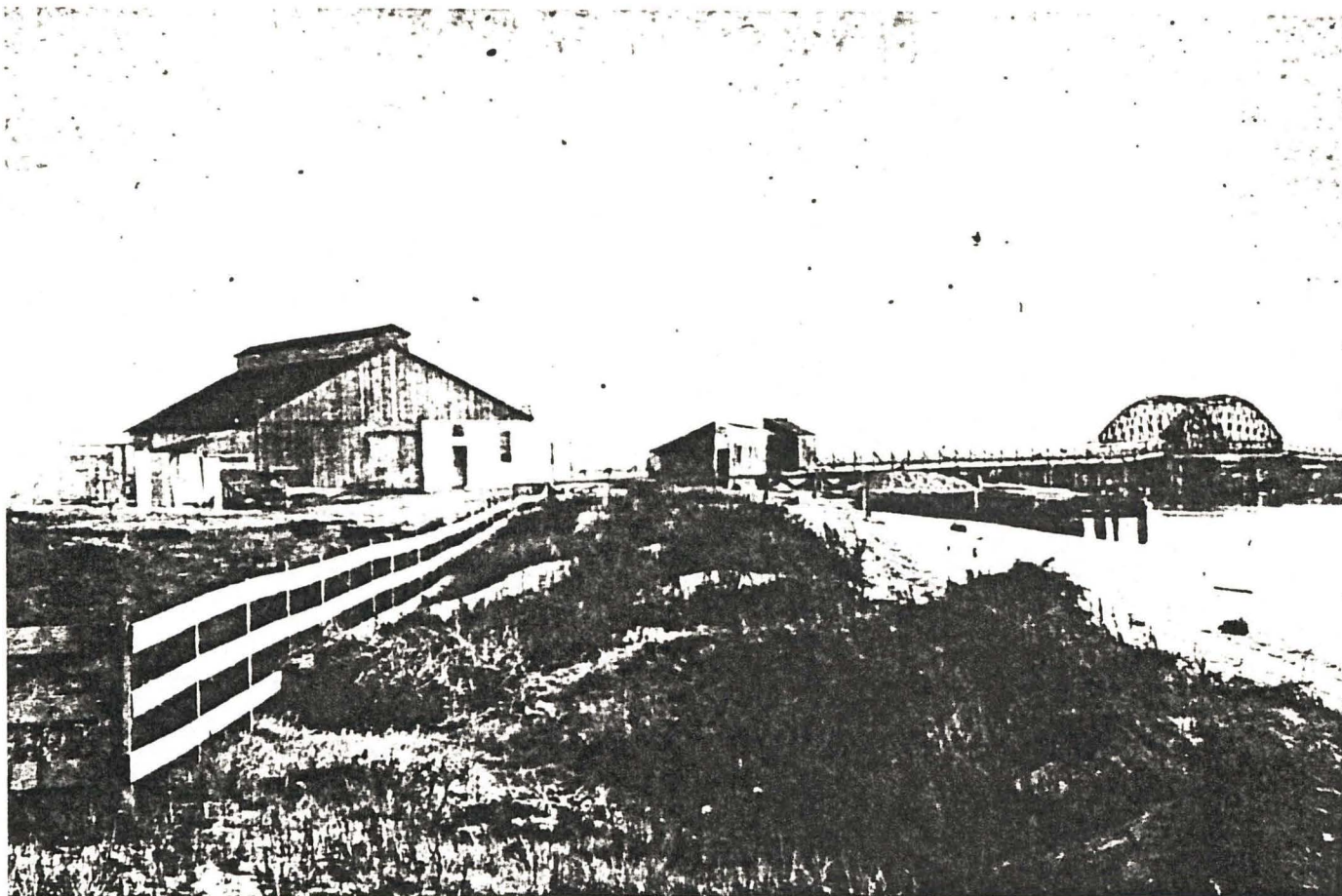


ALAMEDA-BOUND--Here's Capt. Nels Anderson's Caroline getting under way for Alameda and Anderson's Landing at Sand Point. The Caroline was typical of the sailing scows that dotted the bay prior to the turn of the century and often sailed into San Leandro Bay. Hay, straw, lumber and coal composed many of the cargoes.--Photo courtesy of the San Francisco Maritime Museum. ###  
November, 1977

# 13723-1





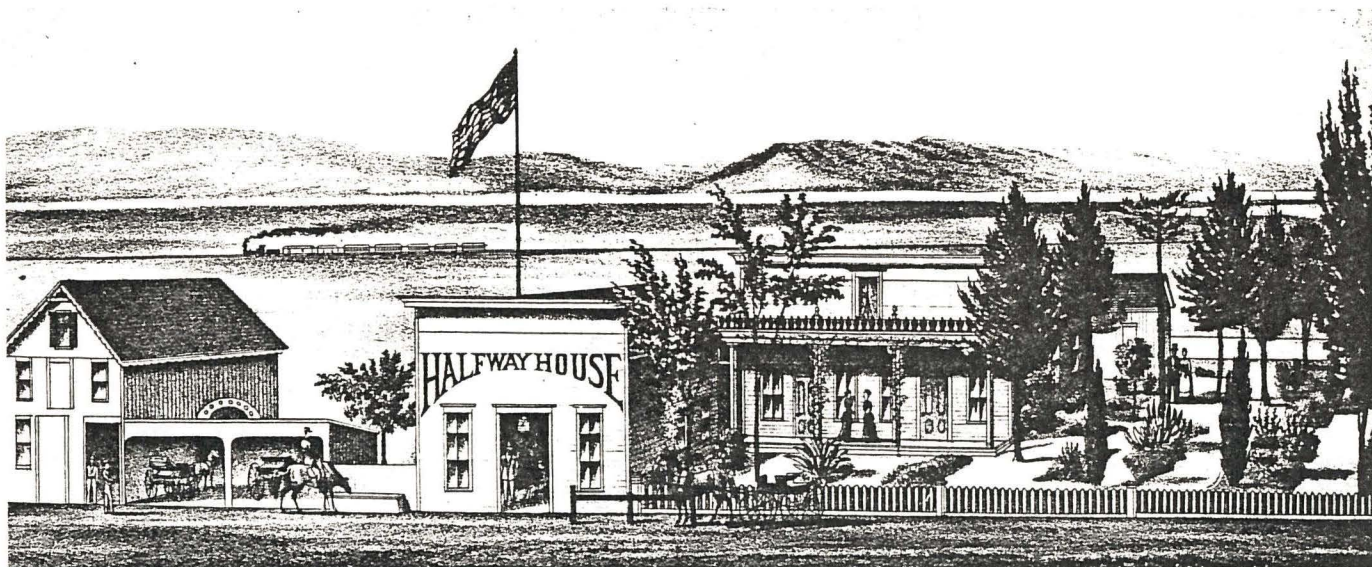


OLDEN DAYS--While the exact date is not known, this is obviously a venerable view of Capt. Nels Anderson's Landing at Sand Point near the Bay Farm Island Bridge. Anderson's Bonita, Caroline and Jenny Gray sailed with fresh produce to the foot of San Francisco's Fillmore Street.

#####November, 1977

#13517-1



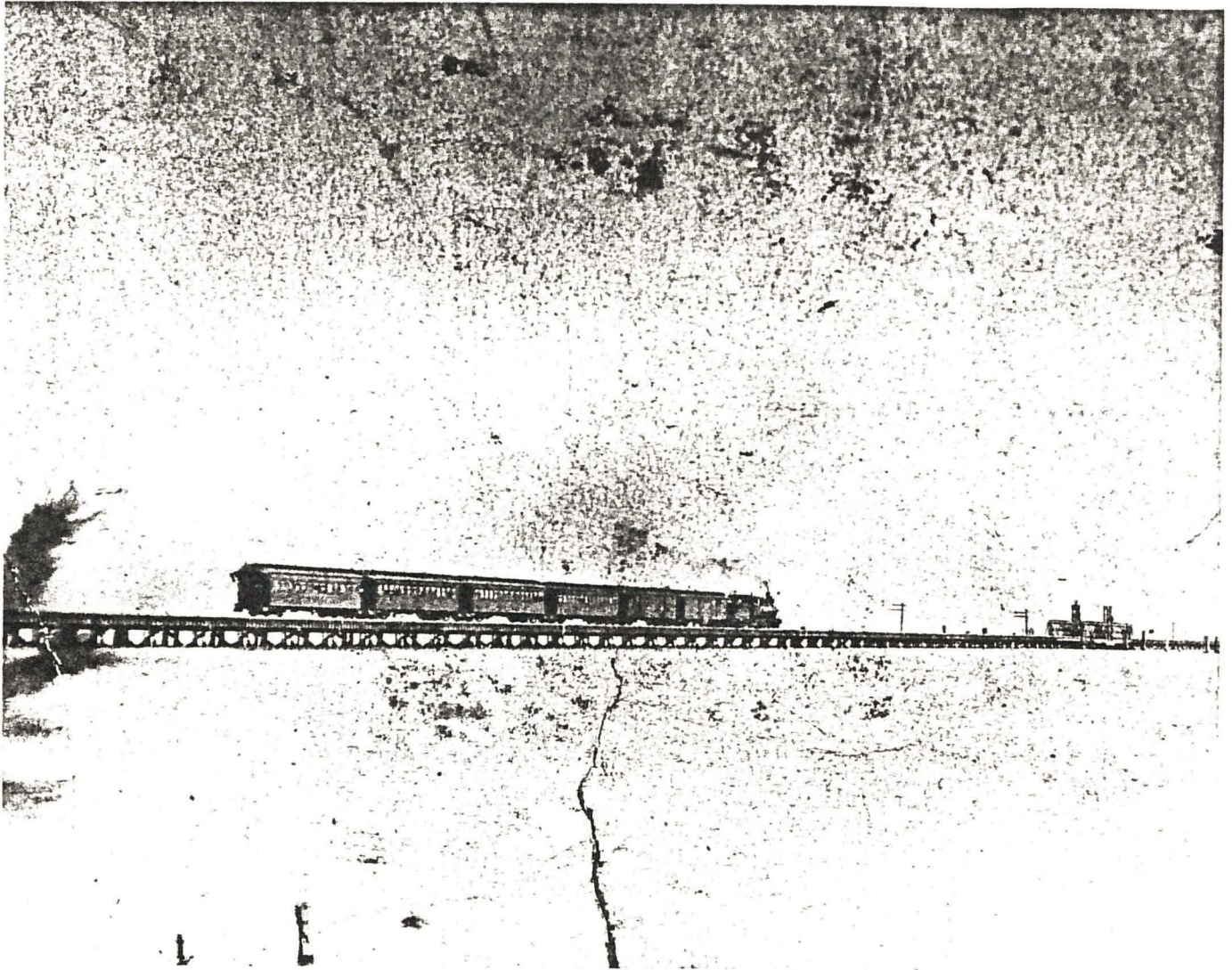


PROPERTY OF W.W. ARMSTRONG, BROOKLYN TP, ALAMEDA CO., CAL.

AXE WEILDER'S HEADQUARTERS?--According to the San Francisco Morning Call, a man trapped by one leg in the November 14, 1869 train collision on the shores of San Leandro Bay, pleaded piteously to be extricated and finally, in desperation, begged rescuers to cut his leg off. Four men from the "Half Way House" on San Leandro Road armed with tools and whiskey, raced to the scene to assist. One of them, in the role of a singular Good Samaritan took an axe and cut off the poor man's leg. He died shortly afterward. The Call's description of the location makes it almost certain that the "Half Way House" referred to was W.W. Armstrong's establishment, depicted in this scene from the 1878 Thompson and West's History. Note the train in the background--Photocopy, courtesy of the Oakland Public Library's California Room. ### November, 1977 #13607







SOUTHBOUND 'RATTLER'--Here's one of the South Pacific Coast Railroad's passenger trains--perhaps the crack "Dandy"--southbound across the mile-long San Leandro Bay trestle in the 1890's. Not far away is the swing span which opened obedient to the needs of water-borne traffic. Alameda is to the left and out of the picture--From the collection of Terry Y. La Croix, Sr. ###Nov., 1977 #13624-1







E. K. HOWES & CO. AGENTS.



MANUFACTURERS OF  
**MANILA CORDAGE**  
HAY, ROPE, TARRERD CORDAGE, ETC.  
118, 120, 122 FRONT ST.

*54*  
*Recd*  
*1 coil 1/2 in Manila rope 60 lb 15 1/2*  
*Said*  
*Pacific Cordage*  
*from ...*  
*May*

SAN LEANDRO BAY FACTORY--Although the Pacific Cordage Company plant on the shores of San Leandro Bay boasted an 1800-foot "rope walk," the longest in the nation, no photographs of the big plant, which opened in 1873, have survived. The 1876-era billhead cautioning that bills are "payable in U.S. Gold" depicts the main building and, if you are sharp-eyed, you can see the "rope walk" extending into the background. In the foreground is a Central Pacific train--  
Photocopy, courtesy of the California Historical Society. #####November, 1977

13723-8



NEW TO-DAY.

ROPE! ROPE! ROPE!

# **PACIFIC Cordage Co.**

☞ This Factory, located on San Leandro Bay, near Melrose Station, is now in full operation, and is prepared to fill orders for

## **Manila Cordage**

....AND....

## **Hay Rope,**

Of all lengths and varieties, TARRED and UNTARRED,

## **OF SUPERIOR QUALITY**

To any ever offered in this Market.

☞ The Works of this Company are so situated that orders can be shipped DIRECT, by Rail or Water, to any part of the State, when so desired by purchasers.

## **Pacific Cordage Company,**

**E. K. HOWES & CO., Agents,**

**118, 120 & 122 Front Street,**

ap26

**San Francisco.**

SAN LEANDRO BAY ROPE--The Pacific Cordage Company, with its 1800-foot "rope walk," the longest in the nation, opened on the shores of San Leandro Bay on April 12, 1873. The Steamer "Alice" hauled raw materials to the plant and finished cordage to San Francisco through San Leandro Bay waters. This is one of their newspaper advertisements. By August, 1873, the firm was manufacturing a 10-mile sounding line for the government.--Photocopy, courtesy of the Alameda Public Library ##### November, 1977 #13575





Chick Warner, was shot—probably fatally. Warner killed one of the robbers.

#### Turkish Troops and the Military Convention.

CONSTANTINOPLE, September 12th.—The Grand Council summoned yesterday to discuss the relations between Turkey and England declared that the Military Convention must clearly indicate the landing place for Turkish troops in Egypt. Shrapnel and Krupp shells.

KASSASSIN, September 12th.—The campaign has demonstrated the vast superiority of the Shrapnel over the Krupp shells. The English fired without haste, as the consumption of ammunition by rifles averaged eight pounds per man. The British soldiers showed great kindness to the wounded Egyptians. Many gave away their water bottles, which, under such a sun, were a prime necessity for their own use. The prisoners all expected instant death.

Glanders in the Cavalry. KASSASSIN, September 12th.—The Indian cavalry horses are suffering from glanders.

Owing to the fall of the fresh water canal, the launches are unable to proceed.

#### Yellow Fever.

GALVESTON, September 12th.—A News Matamoros special says: The fever shows no change. During the twenty-four hours to 9 A. M. yesterday, there were four deaths. In Brownsville Major Witherell and wife are down with the disease, and also the wife of Major Wente. There are eleven cases in garrison. Captain Smith is covered by water, and a steamboat went to bring the troops to Fort Brown yesterday. The Relief Committee gave aid to 378 families, and 3,600 relief tickets have been issued by the committee and \$15,000 received. The quarantine against Matamoros was so far modified to-day as to allow parties to cross by means of a pass.

#### Wolsley at a Standstill.

NEW YORK, September 12th.—A Star cablegram from Ismailia says: The deadlock at the front continues. Despite his repeated announcement of his advance, Wolsley has not gained a foot of ground since he occupied Kassassin lock on August 26th, all his efforts having been frustrated by the boldness and activity of the rebel leader. The fact is, that the British position there has been entrenched under the supervision of engineers, making of the advance post of the invading army what is paradoxically termed "a camp of defense," and the further circumstance that it was found necessary on Sunday to begin the construction of additional rifle pits, nominally to prevent the Egyptians from approaching near enough to shell the British camps, but in reality to strengthen the British lines and afford better protection to the British flanks, in order to guard against repetition of the surprise of the 9th inst.

## A RAILROAD HORROR.

### A Train Ditched on the Marsh and Two Men Killed.

The Fireman Imprisoned Beneath the Locomotive and Drowned by the Rising Tide in Full View of His Helpless Friends—A Brakeman Thrown From the Cars and His Neck Broken—The Engineer and Conductor Seriously Injured.

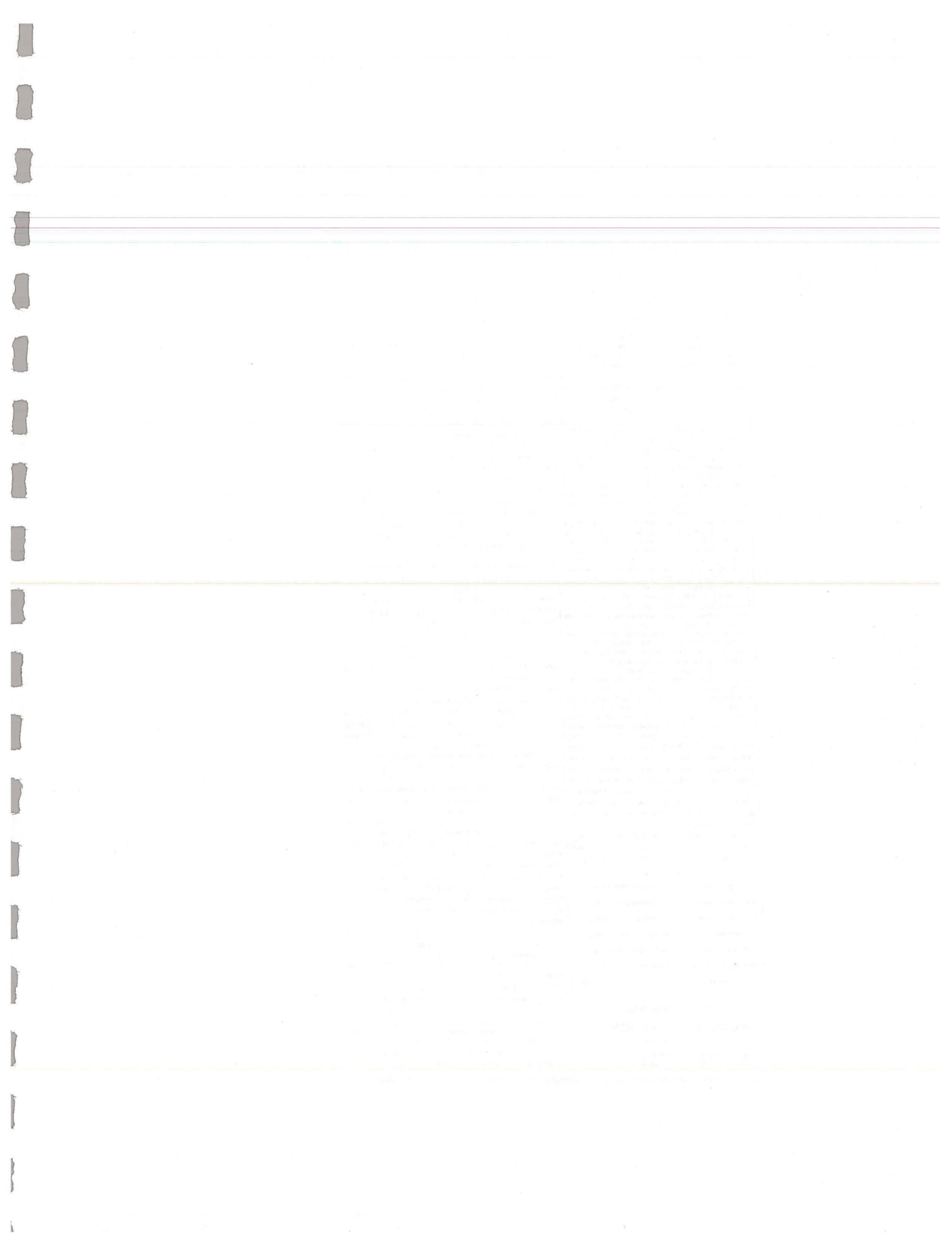
A horrible accident occurred last evening about 8 o'clock on the line of the South Pacific Coast Railroad, at a point about one and a half miles from Park street station, Alameda, on the marshy land east of the estuary known as San Leandro Bay. Two men were instantly killed and two more were seriously injured, and death may follow, making four victims of what may be termed an unsafe road-bed. The through freight train from Santa Cruz, which arrives at Park street station, Alameda at 8 o'clock, was crossing the section named at a rapid rate of speed, when suddenly the track sunk on the side nearest the bay, and in an instant the engine fell over, drawing after it six cars heavily laden with freight. The engine and cars were piled upon each other and a frightful scene ensued. Steam and smoke for a time obscured the view, but coals from the furnace of the engine soon worked their way out and the dark night was lighted for quite a distance around. The engineer of the train, a man named Symons, was thrown from the cab of the engine several feet in front of where the engine was upturned. His nose was broken, his face and head cut in several places and he is probably injured internally. The fireman, Daniel Driscoll went down to his post with his engine and was caught in the debris underneath, where he remained for fully half an hour, with his legs entangled in the machinery, unable to move either backward or forward. He remained in this position crying piteously for aid for fully an hour until assistance arrived. When aid did arrive the poor fellow seemed to realize that any effort made to save him would be fruitless, for the incoming tide was fast surrounding him, and his escape from instant death was supplemented by another awful contingency, that of

#### A DEATH BY DROWNING.

In a conscious condition, and in the presence of strong men who were willing, but helpless, to extricate him. A levee was built on all sides of him to keep the water off temporarily, and a sheet was placed under his arms, the united strength of six men was applied to draw him out, but it was impossible, his feet being so tightly clinched under the cab of the locomotive. Axes were brought out and part of the cab cut away. Before the work could be completed, however, the water washed

HEADLINED "RAILROAD HORROR"—The fertile imagination of Alfred

Hitchcock could not have devised a more ghastly death scenario than that which befell Fireman Daniel Driscoll on the South Pacific Coast Railroad in the marshes south of San Leandro Bay. He drowned while pinned in the locomotive wreckage as the tide crept in. Headline tells of September 11, 1882 tragedy—Photocopy, courtesy of the University of California's Bancroft Library ##### November, 1977 13723-11





## OL MATTERS.

of Managers—  
d—Mr. Sweet's  
case to Corporal  
vs. Sweet—

s of the Industrial  
in the Supervisors.  
Present—Messrs.  
Hall, Sweet, Davis.  
The roll was called  
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uld be accepted.  
It was accepted.  
Mr. Kennedy to fill  
Walker retires from  
School matters.

RESOLUTION.  
following resolution:  
intendent and the as-  
sistants be author-  
ized in the manner  
in public schools in

amendment, that only  
principal teacher be  
discharged.

subject, and asked  
the term "the assist-  
ants" be changed to  
assistants.

trouble existed in the  
the different work-  
shops.

O'Neill's amendment.  
decidedly opposed to

## SEVENTH INDUSTRIAL FAIR.

Articles on Exhibition—The Atten-  
dance—The Masquerade Ball and  
Billiard Tournament.

Twenty-Seventh Day.

Owing to the cold and unpleasant weather  
and the numerous attractions outside, the Fair  
last evening was not as well attended as it usu-  
ally is. The Twelfth Artillery Band from  
Angel Island was expected to be in attendance,  
but for some cause they failed to make their  
appearance. This evening they will be pres-  
ent and divide with Willis' band the honor of  
entertaining the visitors.

### FURNITURE.

In passing the stand of Geo. O. Whitney &  
Co. the eye is sensibly attracted to their es-  
tablishment and costly display of furniture. They  
have on exhibition a massive framed antique  
clawfoot walnut parlor set, tastefully uphol-  
stered in gold and silver brocade; also, there  
is one large and heavily ornamented sideboard  
of walnut, and a beautiful bedroom set of  
rosewood, consisting of eight pieces—the bed  
and bureau surmounted by a handsome bust of  
Shakespeare. On a raised platform is placed an  
elegant inlaid cabinet, a fac-simile of those  
used in the times of Louis XIV, and to the  
right of this we noticed a beautifully designed  
Turkish lounge made of buff and red leather  
buffed. A large sized card table, elaborately  
inlaid and polished, attracts considerable at-  
tention. A bouquet stand, with exquisite  
carved designs, a large handsomely polished  
writing desk and book stand complete the col-  
lection. Messrs. Whitney & Co. employ nearly  
three hundred men in their furniture factory.

### MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES.

The following articles have been just en-  
tered:  
Bouquet of skeleton flowers—Mrs. May.  
Two oil paintings, Turkish scenes—P. Mez-  
zara.  
Samples of improved sewing machine nee-  
dles—Mrs. A. H. Supple.  
Two oil portraits—L. Pelers.  
Specimens of pound pears—E. Brown.  
Specimens of mulberry trees—L. B. Flint.  
Samples of 1,000,000 cocoons—Mrs. C. W.  
Weston.  
Specimens of automatic sewing machine  
needles—J. L. Boon.  
Samples of California sparkling wines—A.  
Finke.  
One plow and two wheelbarrow wheels—P.  
Caduc.  
One heath rug—Mrs. O. E. Williamson.  
Case of perfume—Mr. Simonson.  
Carved picture frame made by a convict in  
the State Prison, with a penknife.  
An ingenious and useful pair of calipers have  
been invented by the accommodating and gen-  
tlemanly entry clerk, J. H. Culver. With  
these calipers a person can ascertain the in-

## THE TURF.

The Great \$10,000 Race at  
Alameda.

"VENTURE" DEFEATED BY  
"HARVEST QUEEN."

Thousands Change Hands on  
the Result.

The great race of yesterday, of course, drew  
an immense crowd; the steamer *Alameda*,  
chartered for the purpose, being crowded from  
stem to stern, fully 2,000 people being on  
board, many being unable to procure tickets in  
time to catch the boat. At the Alameda Land-  
ing the cars, three in number, were not near  
sufficient; seven freight cars were finally  
secured, but even then many were obliged to  
climb on top and hold on as best they might.  
Happily, all reached the grounds in safety.

### THE TRACK.

Was in very good order, every thing that could  
be done in the short time having been done.  
Of course, it was a little heavy, but was in far  
better condition than any one had a right to  
expect. There was no accommodation for re-  
porters, which cannot be overlooked, as those  
interested in the enterprise have been con-  
nected with the turf for a number of years  
and know better.

### THE STABLES.

Are well arranged, forming three sides of a  
square, the fourth side being a shed for stor-  
ing the trainers' wagons, sulkes, etc.

### THE HORSES.

At two o'clock the horses made their ap-  
pearance on the track. Both show much im-  
provement on their colt form. "Venture"  
was in fine condition and has grown consid-  
erably; but "Harvest Queen" is still the same,  
probably a little finer drawn, but as nice limbed  
and saucy looking as ever. The pedigree and  
performances of both we have already given in  
the CHRONICLE. Eoff held the lines over the  
little "Queen," and Farrell took his place be-  
hind the unsteady "Venture."

**First Heat.**—The mare led off and raised the  
hopes of her backers by retaining her lead to  
the half and causing "Venture" to make sev-  
eral skips. A little beyond the half was the  
only bad spot on the track; here the heavy  
dirt caught her tripping and broke her.  
"Venture" took the lead and opened daylight  
before she had recovered. All around the turn  
he kept the lead and up the stretch, taking the  
heat in the very fair time for young horses to  
waggon, of 2:46 3-5.

**Second Heat.**—Rattling which had hitherto

## THE LATE TRAGEDY.

Coroner's Inquest on the Bodies of the  
Victim and the Suicide—The Verdict.

The Coroner impaneled a jury in the case  
of the girl Wagner and her murderer last even-  
ing, and the testimony of three witnesses was  
taken. The witnesses examined were Mrs.  
Catherine Bornheimers, her daughter and Mr.  
P. C. Fogarty. In the first account of the  
tragedy we mentioned the fact that a supposi-  
tion was prevalent, that four shots had been  
fired. This surmise was verified last evening  
by the statement of Coroner Letterman to the  
jury, in which he told them four shots had  
been fired; three at the girl, and the fourth  
which caused the death of Knettle. Mrs. Born-  
heimers, in the testimony shows, saw the girl  
on her knees before Knettle, with her face up-  
ward, and he pointing the pistol toward her.  
In the post mortem examination the Coroner  
discovered that the left temple of the girl had  
a bruised appearance, and on a further investi-  
gation he found a wound in the left shoulder-  
blade, and his theory was that when the girl  
was in a kneeling position before her murderer,  
he fired the first shot, which only grazed her  
temple and lodged in the shoulder. The  
second ball that was fired entered above the  
right cheek-bone, passed out under the jaw and  
thence into her left arm. The third and fatal  
shot entered her head above the left ear, frac-  
turing the skull in three different places and  
passing through the brain. Following is the

### TESTIMONY.

Of the witnesses and verdict of the jury:

Mrs. Catherine Bornheimers sworn—I live at the  
corner of Page and Webster streets; I have  
known Annie Wagner nine months; I knew An-  
thony Knettle about the same length of time; a  
little before the shooting took place I arrived  
from town and found Knettle at home; Annie  
was going after some water, when he said: "Let  
me go after the water, my dear Annie; you will  
spoil your clothes;" this manner of speaking  
was something unusual for him; I then told him  
to feed the hens, and went about my domestic  
affairs; in a few moments afterwards I heard a  
loud scream, and running to the door, I saw  
Annie kneeling on the ground. Knettle holding  
her by the hair, and flourishing a pistol over her  
head; I told him that he would be hung for  
what he was doing, when he said, "I will take  
good care not to get hung," and told me not  
to come a step nearer; she broke away and ran  
toward Webster street; before she got into Web-  
ster street I saw him fire a shot; I do not know  
whether he hit her, but she screamed terribly,  
and I was so excited that I did not see him fire  
the other shots, but heard two; when I came to  
them they were both lying on the ground; his  
feet were about four feet from her head; I saw  
him bleeding; I ran to Annie and carried her  
into the house, where she died that night; I  
never heard him threaten her; on the night my  
house was burned I heard him remark to her  
that, when he had money, he would marry her;  
she said she was not on the marry; she was  
about seventeen years of age, and told me she  
was born in Williamsburg, New York; he was  
employed by me to protect my property from  
parties out there; he had a shooting affair with  
No. 10,000 some time before, when he shot the  
latter in the thigh; this is the statement I would  
make in regard to the death of Knettle.

Mrs. Knettle Bornheimers sworn—I have heard Knet-

## SPEC.

San Francisco  
the first year are  
1887; on Monday,  
great 24, 1889; on  
Monday, October  
ber 15, 1889; on  
Monday, January  
7, 1870; on Mon-  
day of the lots  
end of the month

24 Montgome-  
ry-street  
el-ti

J. W. T.

No. 101 and

SAN F.

MANUFACT

WATCHES,

JEWELRY

SILVER-

Gold Watches,  
Silver Watches,  
Diamond Rings,  
Diamond Pins,  
Diamond Sets,  
Emerald & Diam  
Ruby and Diam  
Amethyst and  
Onyx and Pear  
Onyx and Diam

Hall's

Dock and I

Neuralgia,

Female V

Rheumatic

and all D

disordered

Liver, Sol

J. I

Proprietors,

mercantile

ANTHONY ZELLE

A.

Successors to

Wholesale

BLAN

'THE GREAT \$10,000 RACE'-----The headline in a San Francisco

newspaper heralding the results of the trotting race between "Venture" and "Harvest Queen" at the new Pacific Race Track at San Leandro Bay cited that "thousands change hands on the result." About 3,000 attended. There were some complaints about "watered whiskey."--Photocopy, courtesy of the University of California's Bancroft Library. ##### November, 1977

13723-10

these officers have  
respect to corporal  
and now you want to  
whip whom they like,  
gentlemen to order, Mr.  
to order. What he says  
Me talks and blows  
hips and keys, and so  
what he is talking  
to assert that he be-  
herbert he talks about

agitated by the very distressing scene; but our  
inborn politeness would not allow us to offer  
consolation to the bereaved one. Why she  
was sitting thus alone, sad and weeping, was  
probably a mystery to every one except her-  
self and a nice young man, who was enjoying  
himself with another young lady on the lower  
gallery.

The blowing machine continues to be the  
center of attraction--so much so that every

but she crossed the score, winner of the heat  
in 2:46 1-5, never having made a skip during  
the mile.

**Fourth and Last Heat.**—Now there was a  
change in the pools; those who were in deep  
gave big odds to get out--the current betting  
being "Harvest Queen" \$100 and "Venture"  
\$38. "Venture" had the advantage of the send  
off, but broke, the little mare going to the  
front and staying there, though "Venture" did  
some good trotting down the homestretch, but

We, the undersigned jurors convened to inquire  
into the cause of the death of Annie Wagner, find  
that she is a native of Williamsburg, New York,  
aged seventeen years, and that she came to her  
death from a gunshot wound caused by a pistol  
in the hands of Anthony R. Knettle, October 11,  
1889.

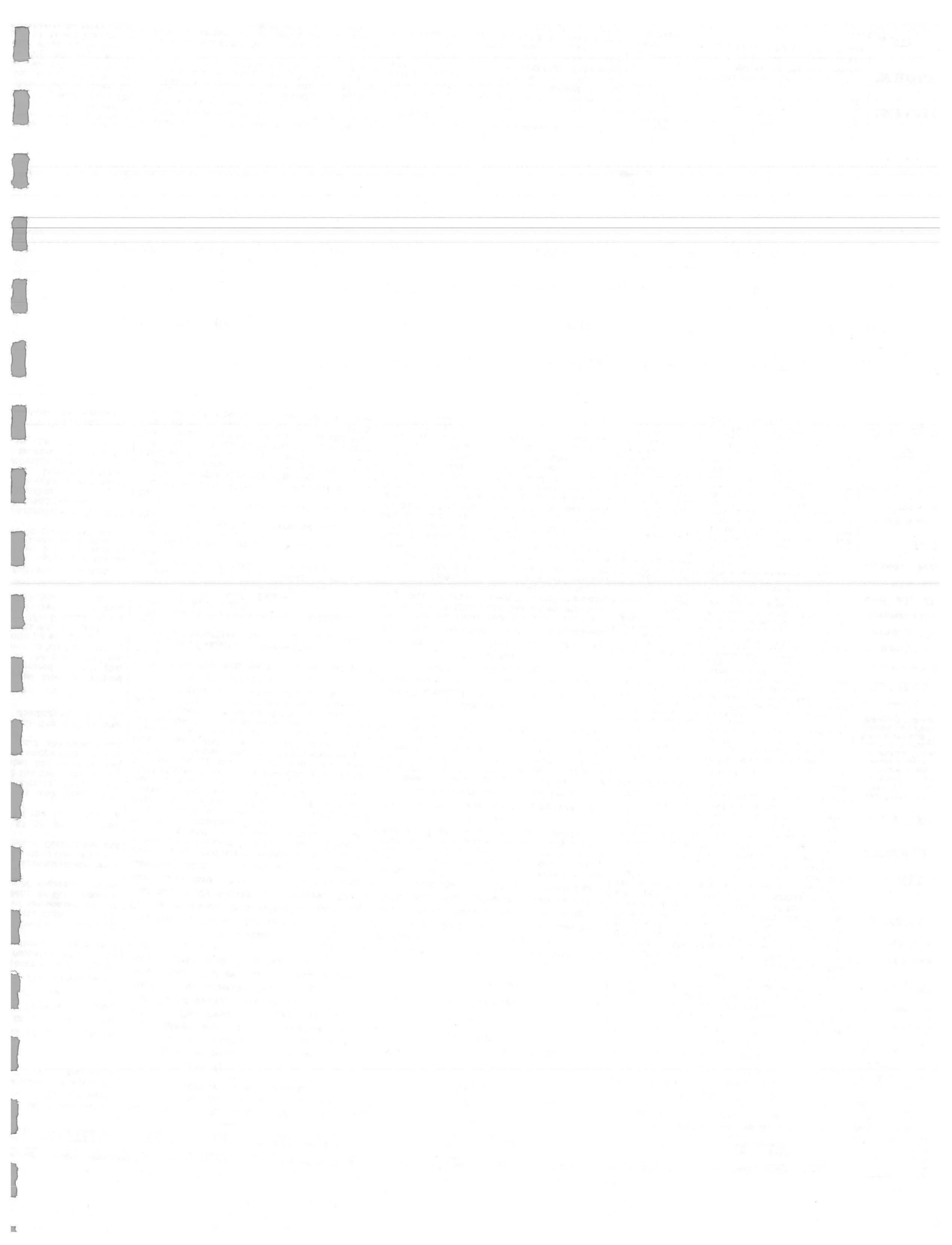
In the case of Anthony R. Knettle, the jury  
found that he was a native of Massachusetts,  
aged forty-five years, and that he came to his  
death from a wound caused by a pistol in his  
own hand.

IMPORT

WHOLE!

AND



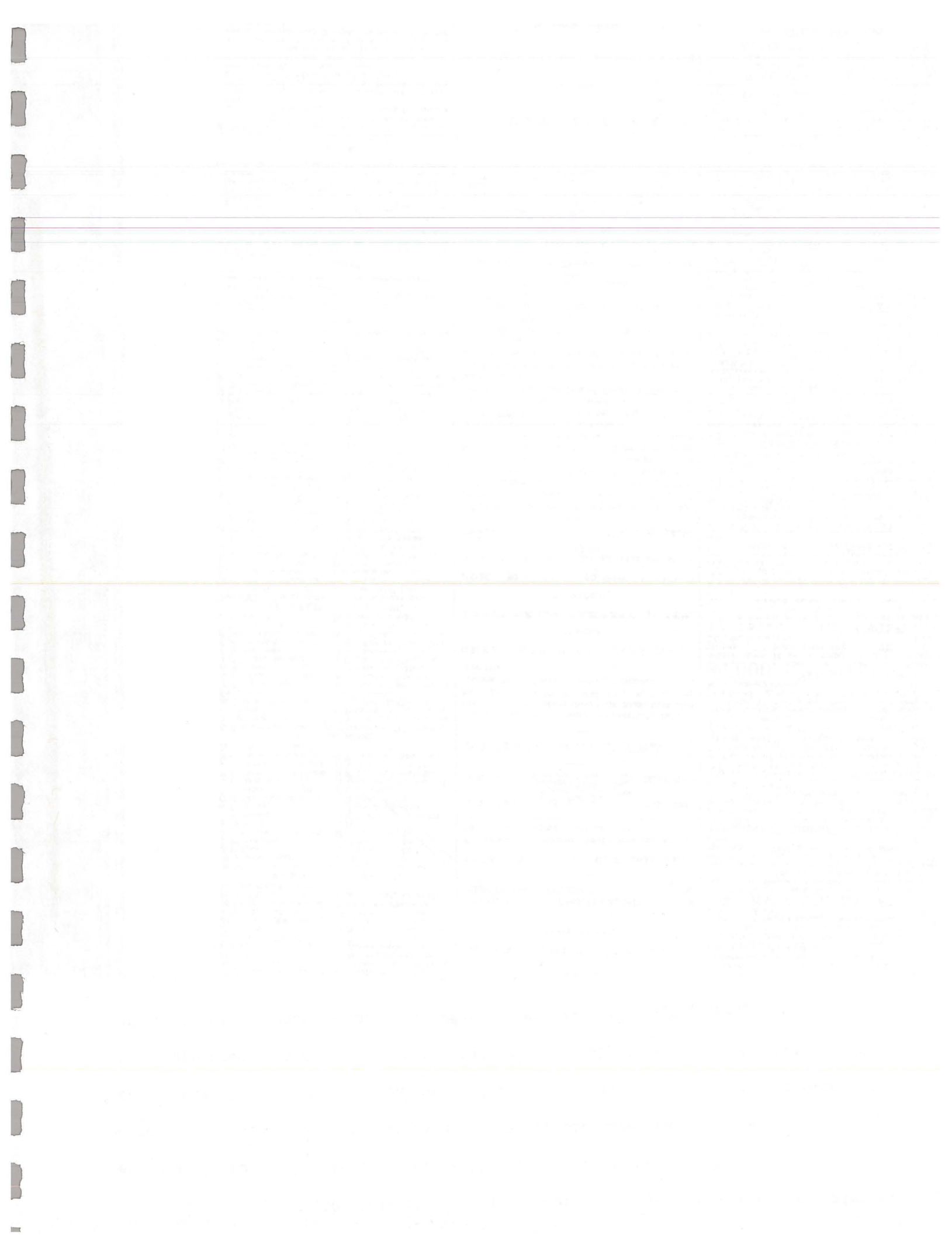




13723-6

### A Wife Wanted.





CIRCULATION---GROSS

42,072

Daily Average July

VOLUME LXXXV.

484. Year

## The Bulletin.

SAN FRANCISCO, TUESDAY EVENING, JULY 19, 1898.

CIRCULATION---NET PAID

36,709

Daily Average June

FIFTH EDITION.

NUMBER 96

# MURDERER BLOWS A POWDER MAGAZINE, KILLS FIVE OFFICERS.

## AWFUL CRIME OF A FUGITIVE CHINAMAN.

He Preferred Death and  
Revenge to Legal  
Punishment.

Caused an Explosion Which Shook the Bay  
Cities and Towns and Dealt Death to the  
Men Who Besieged His Retreat.

One Woman Was Killed in a House Near the Fatal Maga-  
zine After Having Been Warned to Seek  
Safety in Flight.

### LIST OF KILLED.

CHARLES WHITE, the eldest son of Sheriff White.  
GUS KOCH, Constable of Oakland Township.  
J. J. LERRI, Deputy Sheriff.  
GEORGE WOODSUM, of Berkeley, Deputy Sheriff.  
D. C. CAMERON, Deputy Sheriff.  
MRS. HILL, of San Francisco.

Rather than submit to arrest for murder, a Chinese named Chung Ung Chang, employed in the Western Fuse Works, on the outskirts of Oakland, blew up the works, killing, besides himself, the persons named in the above list, destroying \$100,000 worth of property belonging to the fuse company and wrecking a number of adjacent buildings.

Not a vestige was left of the desperate Mongolian, not a brick was found upon the site of the brick magazine in which he had taken refuge from the officers of the law. The entire block in which the fuse works were situated was swept clean of buildings, with here and there a pile of wreckage, marking the former location of the various structures used for manufacturing the large quantities of fuse daily turned out by the establishment. One building farthest from the magazine and used for storing cotton burned vividly for several hours, sending up a cloud of smoke, which served as a guide for the thousands of people who hastened to the scene from Oakland, Alameda and even from this city.

Never before has this community been startled by a more terrible explosion. In the towns across the bay people were rudely awakened by the shock, which rocked their houses, shattered windows and shook pictures and bric-a-brac from the walls. In the immediate vicinity of the catastrophe a great deal of property was de-

stroyed and caused a frightful wound. Chang then buried the blade of the hatchet in the old mare's shoulder. Chang then ran into a shanty, got a revolver and returning fired two shots at him, one passing through King's abdomen. The wounded man was taken to the Receiving Hospital and Chang entered the powder magazine, which contained two tons of giant powder. He barricaded the door and threatened to blow up the magazine if any one came to arrest him. Deputy Sheriff Charles White, son of Sheriff White in charge of a posse consisting of Constable Gus Koch, Deputy Sheriff George Woodsum, Deputy Sheriff D. C. Cameron, Deputy Constable J. J. Lerrri and Deputy Constable Harry Cramer were on the scene of the shooting shortly after the murder and kept guard over the Chinese within his stronghold. All the officers were armed with rifles.

After repeated demands to surrender had been made, in all of which the same reply came:

"If you come in here, I will blow up the magazine." The officers retired for the night within the private office of the company, about twenty yards away. This morning at 8 o'clock Deputy Sheriff Charles White, after a consultation with the others, determined to break down the barricade, not believing the Chinaman would keep his deadly promise. Accordingly, the entire posse headed for the door. It was 8:18



Scene After the Explosion of the Western Fuse Company's Works Took Place.

the scene, a search was made for the bodies of the intrepid officers who had rushed to their death. Deputy Constable W. J. Moffat took charge of affairs. Deputy Sheriff D. C. Cameron had been blown fully 100 feet. His body, bruised and bleeding, but still recognizable, was found at the corner of the

explosion before the great shock came. They think that the Chinaman dived his revolver twice into some powder, causing an explosion each time, and that the last explosion set off the bulk of the powder. The bull-dog pistol with which the celestial was armed was found by W. L. Lobb of Alameda in a field fully a quarter of a mile from the

When he refused the interpreter asked: "How long are you going to stay there?" Chang replied (by): "he might be able to stand the siege two or three days. Then the officers offered him \$10 and a drink if he would surrender, but the Chinese could not be tempted. Finally, shortly after 9 o'clock, he said he would give up and when they approached he blew

## A ASSASSINATION PRECEDED THE SLAUGHTER.

Cheated by a Fellow Work-  
man, Chang Used  
a Hatchet.

After Barricading the Door of the Powder  
House the Desperate Mongolian Defied the  
Officers Who Sought to Arrest Him.

Promised at Last to Give Himself Up, but When the Men  
Approached He Set Off the Explosives Which  
Wrought Disaster.

was early at the scene of the explosion. In an interview with an Oakland Tribune reporter he said:

"I was informed last evening that a wild Chinese had stowed himself away in our powder magazine, being pursued by five deputy sheriffs, who wanted him for attempt at murder upon a fellow countryman. They said he had a pistol as well as matches and a slow fuse, with which he threatened to blow up the magazine if the officers made a charge upon him. I thought I saw the futility of making aggressive measures upon this mad Mongolian, for I knew something of the character, and was assured that he was desperate and would use little sense about any action he might undertake.

"I therefore warned the deputy sheriffs on guard that they had better be cautious and run no risk of endangering their lives and of blowing up the works, by making a rash movement. Furthermore I ordered every one of our employees to desert their posts until after the men was safely secured.

"I warned every resident around there of the existing circumstances and told them that if they remained at their homes they would do so at their own peril. The consequence was that nearly all the people went away for the night—all, I believe, except those in the house of Deputy Constable Stevenson, who lives only a hundred feet from the powder magazine. There were three people in that house at the time of the accident.

"Of the actual details of the explosion and its result, I only know from news items as well as from what I have seen over here. None of our men were lost, because, as I say, they were ordered to leave the premises. By the way, the Chinese barricaded himself with those deadly cakes of explosive, and by the desperate motive ruling him I feared the result.

"It gives me great pain to think of the untimely death of those brave men. This is no time to express any opinion as to the wisdom of their course. I can only grieve with their suffering families and sympathize with their friends. I regret that, save a disaster should

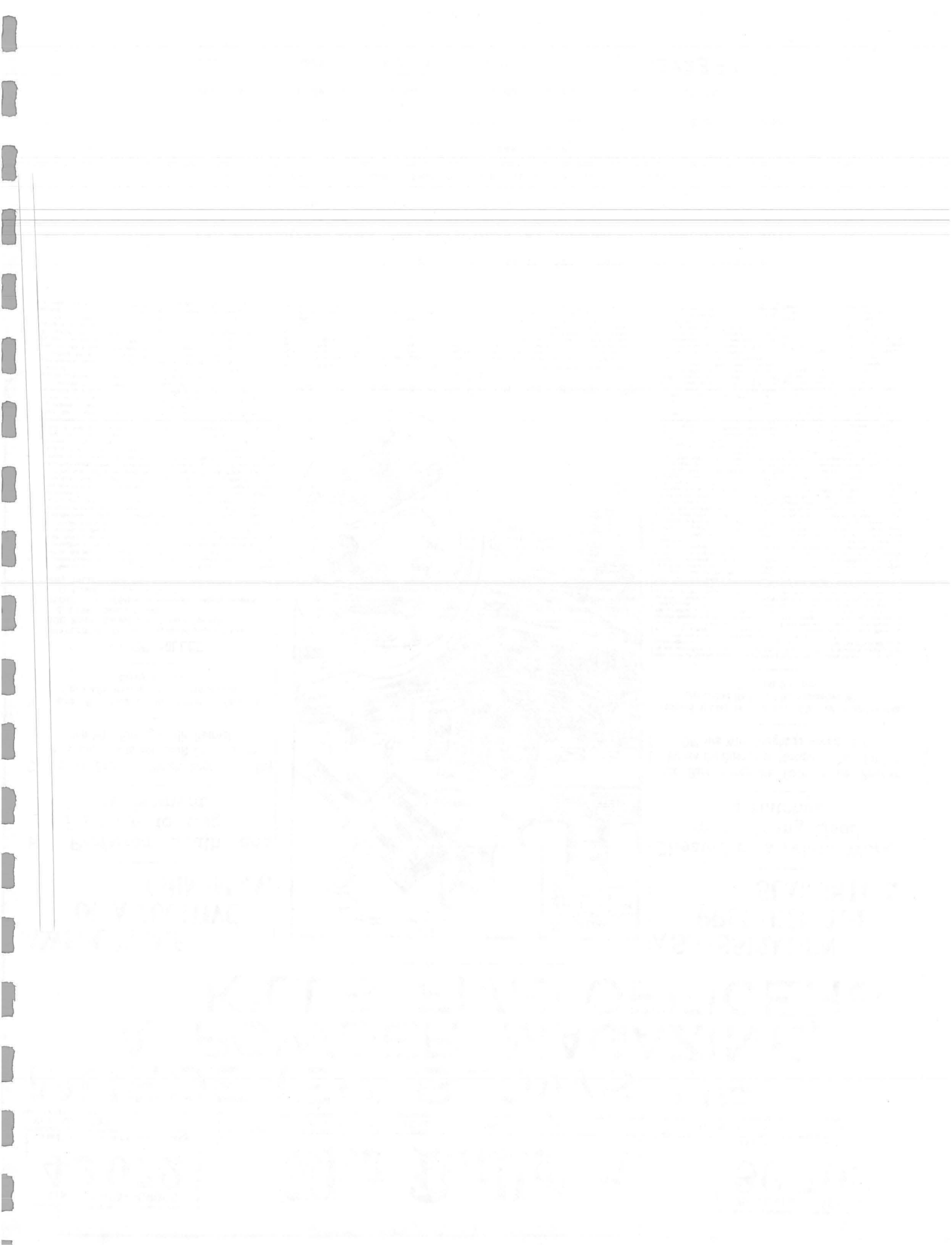
this morning, when he turned the command over to his brother, Chief Jailor Charles White, tells the following story of the disastrous affair:

"With Deputies Smith and Manning, I watched at the powder magazine until 2 o'clock. Before leaving I instructed the relief party to keep away from the entrance and to move further away at the approach of daylight, for I knew the desperate character of the man they were watching, and was satisfied that if molested he would blow up the entire plant. As far as I can learn, my instructions were obeyed in the letter until the Chinaman signified his intention of surrendering, when Deputy Sheriff Cameron, Constable Koch and my brother Charles stepped inside of the gate. My brother asked him if he intended to surrender, and the luncheon said yes. All started to advance toward him, but then came the awful explosion, carrying instant death to the brave men. Only Cameron escaped death, but he only lived long enough to reach the Receiving Hospital. Woodsum and Lerrri did not, as I understood, get inside the enclosure. They were stationed at the north of the fuse works, nearly one hundred yards away. Such were so badly mangled that it was almost impossible to identify them.

The story of Deputy Sheriff Edward White, who escaped unharmed: "I stood about 100 feet north of the magazine when the explosion came, but was not inside of the building. Fred Sherritt and myself were very near together and both heard plainly the conversation between my brother and the Chinaman. My brother told him that if he would come out there would follow a fair trial and good treatment, and he answered the murderer said, 'All right; I am ready to give up.' Instantly the explosion came and I was rendered unconscious. When I came to all was wrecked about me and all of my companions, with the exception of Sherritt, had disappeared. I telephoned to my father and brother and they were soon upon the ground with surgeons and ambulance, but it was too late to save the lives of the poor fellows. All were dead but Cameron, and we knew that he could

'AWFUL CRIME'-- This was the front page of the San Francisco

Bulletin on July 19, 1898, the day following the explosion of the Western Fuse and Explosives Company on the shores of San Leandro Bay. Seven died as 2 1/2 tons of black powder were detonated. News accounts said the tragedy followed in the wake of an argument by two Chinese over the proceeds of a 25-cent seven-spot lottery ticket. One man shot the other, fled to the powder magazine and fired a shot into the powder when deputies approached--Photocopy, courtesy of the University of







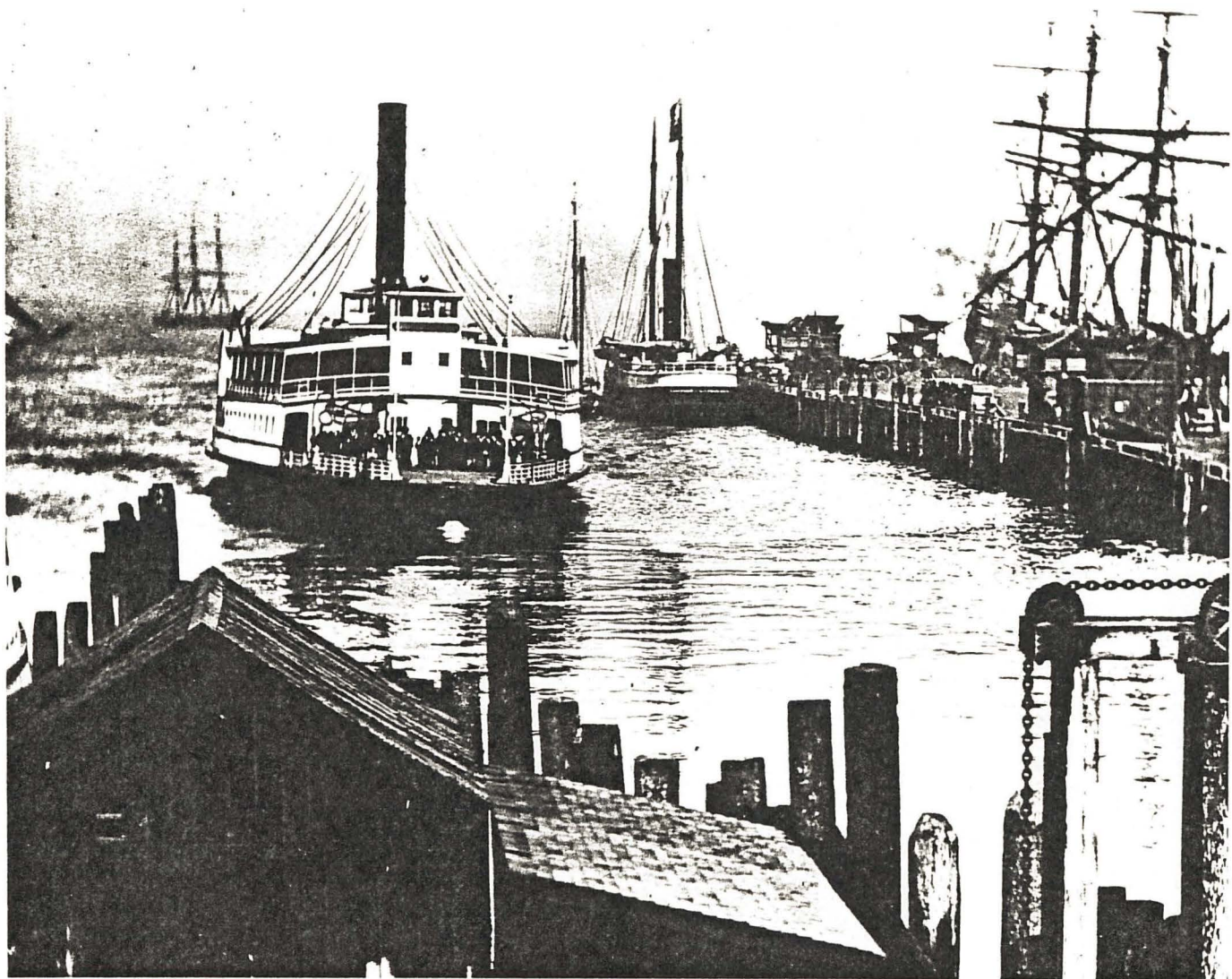
OYSTERS AND SHOTGUN GUARD--Around the turn of the century, not only did the "oyster pirates" carry on clandestine thefts in the oyster beds off Alameda's shores and probably in San Leandro Bay, but audacious claim jumpers staged daytime raids. This rare view shows workmen poling an oyster barge under the watchful eyes of a shotgun guard preparatory to tonging more of the bivalves.

--Photo, courtesy of the California Room, San Leandro Public Library #### 11-1977

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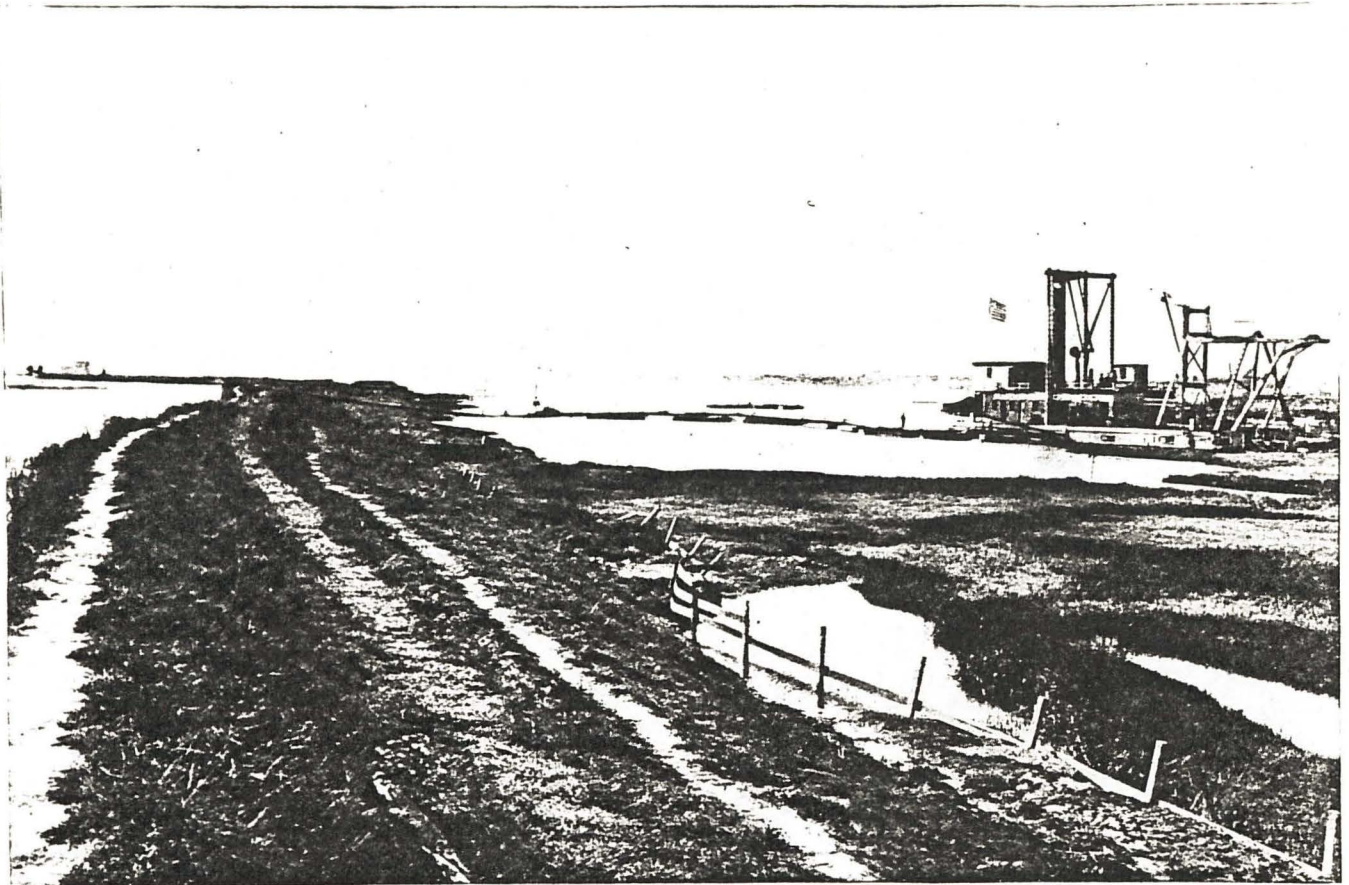
SAN LEANDRO BAY GRAVE--The old Ferry Alameda, making such a brave showing in this San Francisco Maritime Museum photo, was used for a crib for rocks and rip-rap when she was 32 years old to bolster the sagging swing span of the South Pacific Coast Railroad. She met this unseemly fate in 1897. Do ghostly commuters' footsteps still tread on her decks in the San Leandro Bay ooze?

##### November, 1977

#13723-2







EXCAVATING CANAL

DIGGING THE ESTUARY--Excavating the Oakland Estuary required 13 years, chiefly due to a lethargic congress which often skipped appropriations. From planning to completion, 29 years elapsed. Here, a dredge is hard at work the southern end. San Leandro Bay is in the background. The San Francisco Bridge Company owned the dredge.--Photo, courtesy of the Oakland Public Library's California Room. ##### November, 1977

13723-5





## **Oakland Daily Transcript.**

Office—Broadway, between 11th and 12th Streets.

**Monday Morning, Nov. 15, 1869.**

**THE TRANSCRIPT HAS A LARGER CIRCULATION THAN ANY OTHER PAPER IN THE COUNTY.**

### **THE CALAMITY OF YESTERDAY.**

While the chronicles of railroad disaster fill a frequent and a bloody page in the journalism of this and other countries, our own State has heretofore, most fortunately, been wholly exempt from this class of direful visitation. Up to this morning, California had never had a railroad fatality of any moment. Discretion and prudence have marked the management of our roads, and a beneficent Providence, wiser than the vigilance of man, has shielded us from other dangers against which human foresight were futile. But to us, also, has come at length, a great calamity. Within a few miles of our city, the tranquil Sabbath air was yesterday broken by the din of a collision which, in respect of mortality, will figure as among the most lamentable in the annals of railroad accidents.

We give up a large part of our available space to-day to a full and circumstantial record of all the details of this sad occurrence. The bloody work of yesterday will engage the attention of our citizens for many a day, and for the present, at least, all other matters must give place. We have

## **TERRIBLE ACCIDENT ON THE ALAMEDA ROAD!**

**Collision Between the  
Western Pacific and  
Alameda Trains.**

**FOURTEEN KILLED AND TWENTY-  
THREE WOUNDED.**

**BOTH ENGINES SMASHED  
TO PIECES.**

**THE CARS ARE DRIVEN INTO  
EACH OTHER.**

**HORRIBLE SUFFERING OF  
THE WOUNDED.**

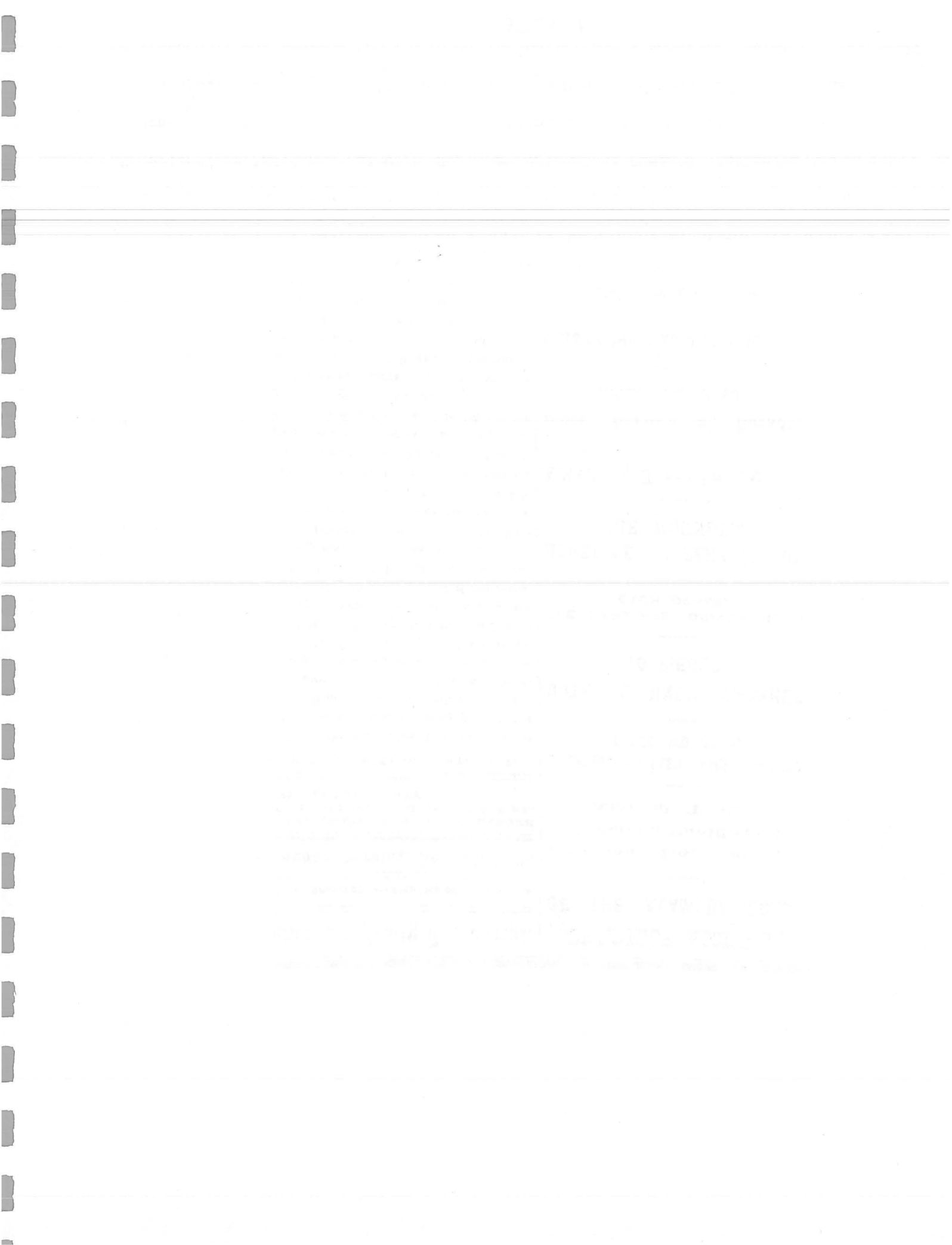
**A Man's Leg Hewn off with an Axe.**

**Judge Baldwin of Nevada,  
Among the Killed.**

**LISTS OF THE DEAD AND WOUNDED.**

**Incidents of the Tragedy.**

RAILROAD CATASTROPHE--Six days after the first transcontinental train arrived in Oakland, the railroad was baptized in blood when the east-bound "overland" collided head-on with the Alameda local at Damon's Station on the southeast shore of San Leandro Bay. The final death toll was 15. Cars were telescoped. The Transcript's headline says "A Man's Leg Hewn Off With an Axe."





SAN LEANDRO BAY PIONEER--A native of Massachussetts, Nathniel Damon founded his Damon's Landing on the southeast side of San Leandro Bay circa 1852-53. With three sailing scows, wharves and a retail store on "San Leandro Road," Damon "became the best known shipper" on the east side of San Francisco Bay--Photo from the Laura Tittmore collection #####November, 1977





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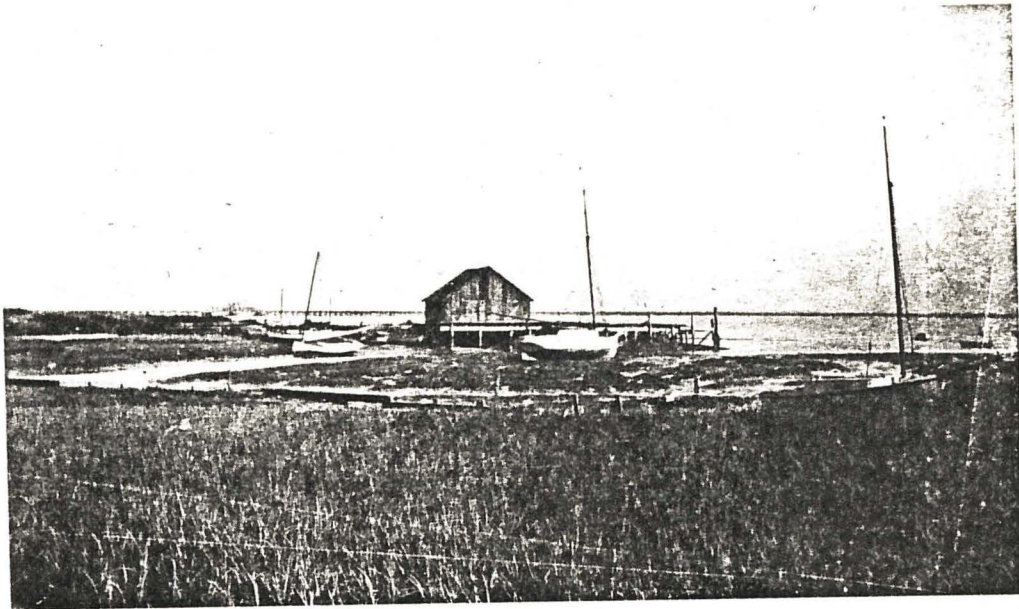
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--Photocopy, courtesy of the University of California's Bancroft Library #####11-1977

13723-9

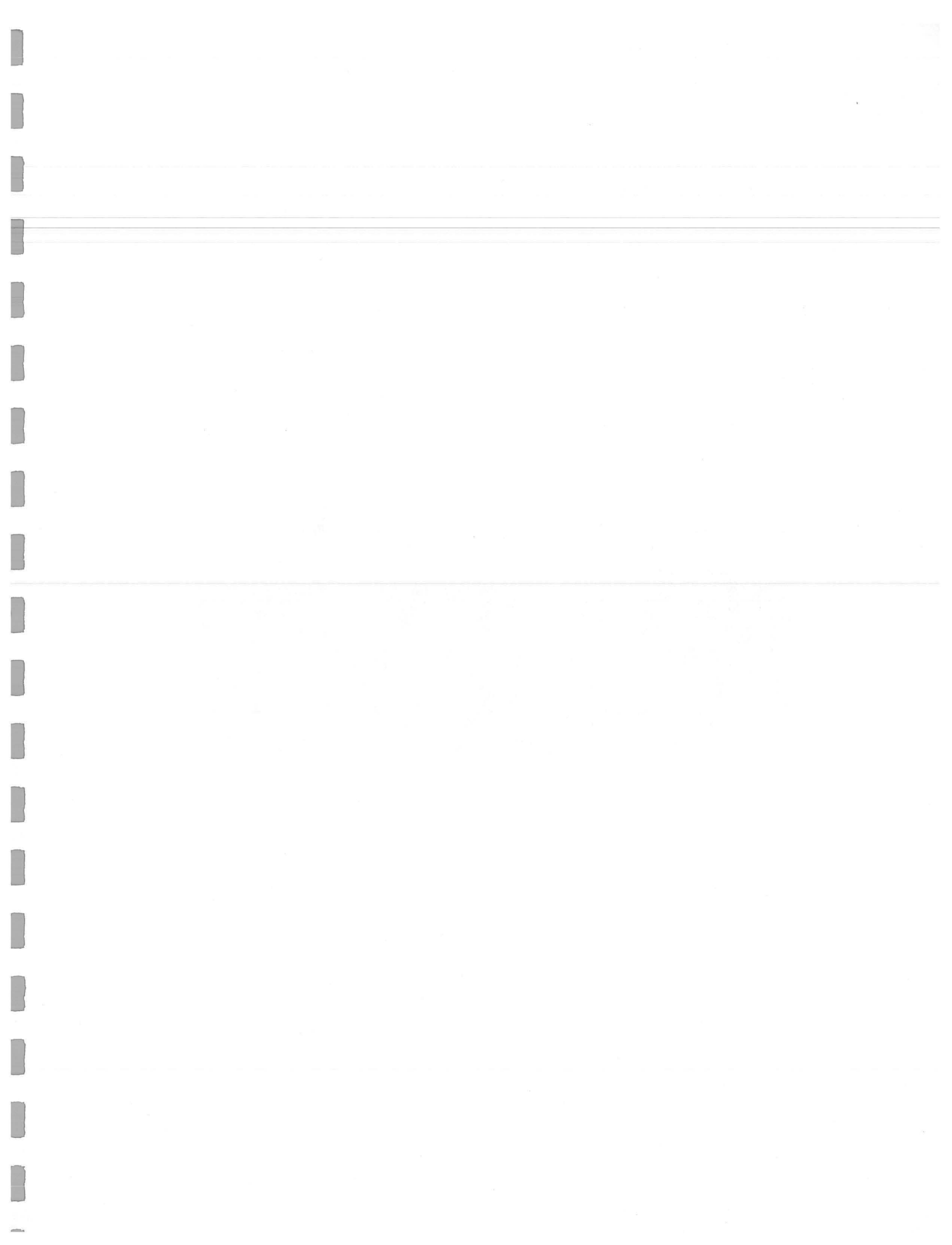


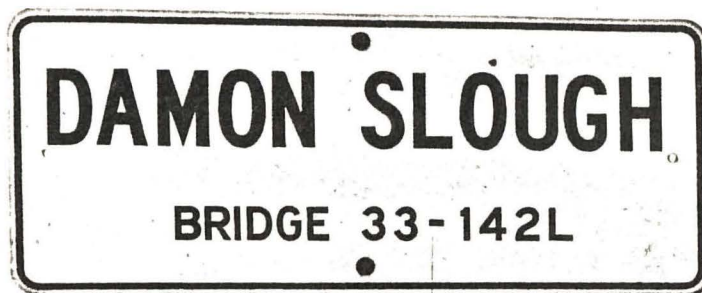




SAN LEANDRO BAY PASTORAL--With the South Pacific Coast  
Railroad trestle in the dim background, this is a view of San Leandro Bay's  
Alameda shore with sailing sloops canted slightly at low tide. This was a typical  
early view with thousands of acres of marshland rimming the bay.--Photo  
courtesy of the San Francisco Maritime Museum. ##### November, 1977

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125 YEARS IN RETROSPECT--This familiar sign on the Nimitz Freeway near the Coliseum marks what once was the San Leandro Bay inlet that led to Nathaniel Damon's Landing, founded about 125 years ago. Pictured is Nathaniel Damon, namesake grandson of the Alameda County pioneer. He lives in Richmond.

--Monte Monteagle Photo #####November, 1977 # 13582-3



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Monteagle. Lively century: San I



